



OCTOBER 22, 2018

FastTrack

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There's No Place Like Kansas

Chase Elliott Can "Dew" to Win in Kansas



John Hunter Nemechek Puts the Pink in Victory Lane

Then There Were Eight

Clint Bowyer got straight to the point Sunday afternoon after a 13th-place finish locked down a spot in the Round of 8 in the NASCAR playoffs, saying:

“Now it is getting down to the nitty-gritty. Now it is eight good teams. There are 16 good teams but there are eight [darn] good teams. All

eight of these teams have found victory lane and things like that. Now you are starting to pick up the pace or go home.”

Indeed. Brad Keselowski, Ryan Blaney, Alex Bowman and Kyle Larson didn't get that message quick enough. All four were eliminated following Sunday's race at the Kansas Speedway.

So now we're down to eight teams. All eight have victories this year. All eight have had their ups and downs. And just by surviving two rounds of cuts, all eight have shown a resilience to stay alive.

Not only will the next three races, starting with Sunday's 500-lapper at the Martinsville Speedway, be nitty-gritty, but it will also be interesting for a lot of reasons.

First, nobody has more momentum than Chase Elliott. He won at Kansas, and it was his second victory in the last three races. But he doesn't have the benefit of having any teammates in the next round – or beyond. Nobody is left from Chevrolet or Hendrick Motorsports.

“Well, I feel like we are amongst those guys that you have to beat and I think that is all you can ask for,” Elliott said. “We are getting better. I think we still have room to improve, but the last month or two has been way closer to where we need to be. I'm proud, excited and ready to move on.”

Defending champion Martin Truex Jr. certainly has the experience – and speed – but his team clearly has lost a step since Furniture Row Racing announced it was closing its doors at the end of the year. Truex has four wins this year, but the last one came on July 14. Since that last victory, his average finish is just 13.8, and it poses the legitimate question of maintaining focus when the unemployment line is a month away.

“We just know we got to be better and we all know it. I know it,” he said. “We all know and we'll do whatever it takes. I thought we could've won the first three playoff races and then the last three we haven't been as good as we need to be and hopefully the next three we'll step it back up.”

Kyle Busch picked a good time to round into championship form. He has one win during the playoffs, and his two top-10 playoff finishes came at the Charlotte Roval road-course race and at Talladega, the two races that are considered wild cards.



DON COBLE

With Keselowski and Blaney being sent to the sidelines, Logano is the lone representative of Penske Racing. He advanced with second-round finishes of third, fifth and eighth, but probably

will take a victory to move into the winner-take-all final round at the Homestead-Miami Speedway. Since Logano's lone victory came at Talladega, a restrictor-plate track, he faces an uphill battle.

And that leaves Stewart-Haas Racing. All four teams – Bowyer, Kevin Harvick, Kurt Busch and Aric Almirola – rallied around each other to advance as a group. But now that we're down to the final four races of the year, it's more likely someone soon will break rank.

As far as team owners Tony Stewart and Gene Haas are concerned, as long as they get to sit at the head table during the NASCAR Awards Banquet, they don't care which drivers wins the championship.

But don't expect everyone else under the SHR banner to feel the same way.

“We are the team to beat,” Bowyer said of his organization. “We are the organization that is on the top right now. There is a great deal of pride that goes with that and a great deal of pride that comes with the manufacturer support and help we get from Ford. That army of people behind those four cars, and we are the only ones that have all four cars that have been in Victory Lane. The only one still alive with all their cars, all their guys. All efforts are still all chasing a championship and that is pretty awesome.”

Busch already knows he's not returning to SHR next year, so it may not be surprising if he's the first from the group to jump ship.



Clint Bowyer (right) talks with Jamie McMurray before qualifying at Kansas Speedway Friday afternoon. (MATT SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES photo)

“It is exciting for us. It is our goal to win the championship,” Busch said. “We are an elite eight team when we started Daytona and here we are. We are back on even ground. We are in the top-8 and Martinsville is the path to the championship down in Homestead.”

No matter which of the eight re-

maining drivers find a way to advance to the final round – and eventually win the championship – Bowyer found another way to say it with his usual brand of homespun truth:

“It is go time. The money is on the line. You gotta go out there and get it.”

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**MENCS - NIGEL KINRADE PHOTOGRAPHY
NASCAR XFINITY - JONATHAN FERREY/GETTY IMAGES**

Huffman Ready for Texas Roadhouse 200

The championship playoff race for the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series will be the center of attention, but one local racer will look to change the headlines next Saturday at Martinsville Speedway.

Landon Huffman will partner with Niece Motorsports to drive their #38 Plan B Sales

Chevrolet Silverado in the October 27th event. Huffman will have Austin Wayne Self and Justin Fontaine as teammates at Niece Motorsports for the Camping World Truck Series annual Fall race at the historic half-mile track.

"I'm very excited about going to Martinsville with Niece Motorsports," Huffman said after the announcement. "This is a huge opportunity to go back to Martinsville and have an opportunity to contend for a top-10 finish. Niece Motorsports has worked hard to be-

come a player in the Truck Series and I'm looking forward to being a part of that very soon."

The third-generation racer and son of former Five Time NASCAR Goody's Dash Series Champion Robert Huffman will look to better his previous visit to race at Martinsville.

"Last year, I drove for Mittler Brothers in a collaborative effort with Copp Motorsports," Huffman added. "I feel like we ran well for what we had to work with. Actually, we restarted in the top 12 on the final restart, but got run over several times and finished 17th."

The UNCC Marketing student started racing go-karts at age 4 and had competed on the short tracks in the Carolinas in Limited and Late Mod-



DENNIS PUNCH



Landon Huffman was happy to announce that he would be racing in the Texas Roadhouse 200 in a truck fielded by Niece Motorsports. (LANDON HUFFMAN photo)

els for many years. Huffman was the 2015 Hickory Motor Speedway Paramount Kia Challenge Champion and made his Automobile Racing Club of America (ARCA) debut in August, 2016, at Berlin Speedway in Marne, Michigan. Driving for Venturini Motorsports, Huffman qualified fourth and finished 15th after a late-race accident ended his evening.

Huffman made his NASCAR Camping World Truck Series debut at Bristol in 2017 driving the #63 entry for Mittler Brothers and finished 20th.

"It was such an awesome experience for me at both Bristol and Martinsville last year," Huffman continued. "I learned so much in a short period of time between my two starts. Coleman Pressley did an excellent job on the spotters stand and I'm glad to have him back again too."

The Claremont, North Carolina driver has had limited opportunities to race this season due to funding, and he realizes that his third career Camping World Truck Series start may be his last for now.

"Honestly, I have high expectations going into Martinsville," Huffman said. "Cody Efav (GM and crew chief) and the guys at Niece Motorsports have prepared a really nice #38 Plan B Sales Chevrolet. With a competitive truck, I'm confident in our ability to show up and perform. Then, who knows what the future holds?"

"With a Martinsville truck race under my belt, I think that we can

realistically go fight for a top-five," Huffman added. "And, if we take care of our equipment during the race, you never know how those races will end up. We could have a real shot at the end. This year has been a true test of my patience as I have raced less in 2018 than I have in my entire career."

"This opportunity couldn't come at a better time for me," Huffman explained. "I am extremely thankful for the chance to drive for Team Dillon and begin a new relationship with Al Niece and Niece Motorsports. This is where I need to be moving forward and I'm excited to get to Martinsville and show what we can do."

"Martinsville is definitely a tough track, but I think it's something that Landon's background will play well into," Efav stated. "He's done some short track racing in these trucks before, which will also help. We've been working hard to put together a strong piece for Landon and the 38 team. If we can keep our nose clean, I definitely think Landon can show what he capable of."

Niece Motorsports has run a third truck on several occasions this season with Max McLaughlin, Ross Chastain, and TJ Bell behind the wheel. Chastain qualified 10th and finished 12th at Bristol for the best showing for the 38 team to date.

There's no question that the six remaining contenders for the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series 2018 Championship will receive much of the hype for the Texas Roadhouse 200 at Martinsville. But, if they're not careful, a young gun from Claremont, North Carolina just might steal some of their thunder.



Crewmen at Niece Motorsports work to get the #38 truck ready for Landon Huffman and the Martinsville race. (NIECE MOTORSPORTS photo)



It is all good as Chase Elliott celebrates his victory at Kansas Speedway Sunday afternoon. (BRIAN LAWDERMILK/GETTY IMAGES)

Chase Elliott Makes a Playoff Statement with Kansas Win

KANSAS CITY, KS - It took 99 races for Chase Elliott to get his first Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series victory.

Ten events later, the scion of NASCAR Hall of Famer Bill Elliott has three wins, the latest coming at Kansas Speedway in the Sunday's Round of 12 elimination race in the series Playoffs.

Elliott took charge in the Hollywood Casino 400 when Kevin Harvick was hit with a pit road speeding penalty on his last green-flag pit stop on Lap 214 of 267. After inheriting the lead when Brad Keselowski came to pit road on Lap 224, Elliott stayed out front the rest of the way.

Over the closing laps, runner-up Kyle Busch chopped Elliott's three-second lead to .300 seconds but could get no closer.

Elliott crossed the finish line .903 seconds ahead of Busch, as Kyle Larson—needing a victory to advance to the Round of 8—came up short with a desperation charge that carried him to third-place finish.

The victory was Elliott's second in three weeks, as the driver of the No. 9 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet made a statement entering the next round of the Playoffs.

To Elliott, the "overnight" success wasn't a surprise.

"I thought last year we had a pretty solid run at it and didn't win any, obviously, but had some really good runs," Elliott said. "Just so proud of my race team and the pit stops we had today. (Crew chief) Alan (Gustafson) made some great calls.

"We just can't get complacent. This is a huge time of year. We have a lot of work to do and a long way to go."

Elliott was well aware Busch was gaining on him near the end of the race, but he was reluctant to run up against the outside wall, where Busch was gaining ground.

"I got really tight that last run, and especially the second half of the run, he was catching me, and he was making a lot of time right against the wall, and I was just afraid to get up there and put it in the fence and really ruin it," Elliott said.

"I felt comfortable running down just slightly. I could move up a little bit to make some time when I had to; I just really didn't want to do it if I didn't absolutely have to."

Fortunately for Elliott, Busch's effort stalled out in the final laps.

"We had a great race there at

the end," Busch said. "We were trying to chase down Chase. We were close. Got kind of there, then just the car died out, didn't have any more to go. I was afraid that was going to happen. Good day for us."

Elliott and Aric Almirola, who finished 10th on Sunday, already were guaranteed berths in the Round of 8, thanks to respective wins at Dover and Talladega. Harvick, who came home 12th after leading 76 laps, locked himself into the next round with a second-place result in Stage 1.

Pole winner Joey Logano led a race-high 100 laps and cemented his position in the next round with a Stage 1 victory and an eighth-place finish.

Kyle Busch and reigning series champion Martin Truex Jr. (fifth on Sunday) are still alive in the championship battle.

So, too, are Clint Bowyer and Kurt Busch, as all four Stewart-Haas Racing drivers advanced to the Round of 8. Bowyer finished 14th after the nose of his No. 14 Ford sustained damage on restart from contact with Jimmie Johnson's Chevrolet.

Kurt Busch made the next round despite a tire violation on pit road that cost him a lap. Busch finished

18th but ended the day six points ahead of Ryan Blaney for the last spot in the Round of 8. Blaney was third in Stage 1 and second in Stage 2 but slapped the wall on Lap 204, dropped to seventh at the checkers and finished six points behind Kurt Busch for the final berth.

"I'm really happy," Kurt Busch said. "It's exciting for us. It's our goal to win the championship. We're an elite eight team when we started Daytona and here we are—we did it. It was a rough day in the pits and on the track but we had enough points from the (Charlotte) Roval and our stage races.

"It was a rough day, and we need to put it quickly behind us. We're back on even ground. We're in the top eight, and Martinsville (next Sunday) is the path to the championship down in Home- stead."

Eliminated with Blaney were Larson, sixth-place finisher Brad Keselowski and ninth-place Alex Bowman, whose only path to the Round of 8 would have been a Kansas victory.

Erik Jones, who was eliminated from the Playoffs in the first round, scored his second fourth-place result in the past three races.

John Hunter Nemechek Scores First Xfinity Win; Early Wreck Scrambles Playoffs

KANSAS CITY, KS - John Hunter Nemechek grabbed his first NASCAR Xfinity Series victory in a race that threw the championship battle into chaos.

Pulling away with three laps after the final restart on Lap 169 of 200, Nemechek took the checkered flag 5.200 seconds ahead of Daniel Hemric to win the Kansas Lottery 300 at Kansas Speedway, the venue where his father, Joe Nemechek, won his final NASCAR Cup Series race in 2004.

Though Nemechek fell far behind Hemric after sliding through his pit box during a green-flag stop on Lap 150, he caught a break when Vinnie Miller stalled near the exit from pit road to cause the seventh and final caution on Lap 164.

Nemechek powered his No. 42 Chip Ganassi Racing Chevrolet from sixth place on the restart and passed Hemric for good after a side-by-side battle on Lap 171.

"When that caution came, I knew we had a chance," Nemechek said. "Luckily, Daniel and I raced each other hard and clean all day. We got the track position, and this thing was on rails today. I feel

like we've been contending for wins all year. We just haven't pulled through.

"To check the first one off—that's the hardest one to get. Hopefully, we can go on. We're racing for the owners' championship at Homestead."

Nearly 200 laps before Nemechek crossed the finish line, however, a shocking, monumental crash jolted the hopes of four title contenders and turned the Playoff standings upside-down.

Third-place starter Justin Allgaier, second in points, got loose in the second corner on Lap 1 and clipped the No. 20 Toyota of series leader Christopher Bell, turning Bell's car into the outside wall. Allgaier's No. 7 Chevrolet bounced off Bell's Camry like a pinball and collected the No. 22 Ford of Playoff driver Austin Cindric.

Allgaier and Cindric were unable to continue. Bell's team tried in vain to repair his Toyota, but Bell retired after completing two laps. Also damaged in the first-lap incident was the No. 00 Ford of Cole Custer, which fell 10 laps down while his team tried to fix the power steering.

Custer earned a hard-fought 26th-place finish but fell to seventh in the Playoff standings.



John Hunter Nemechek parties up a confetti storm in Kansas Speedway's victory lane after winning the Kansas Lottery 300. (MATT THACKER/NKP photo)

"I was the cause of the incident, unfortunately," a rueful Allgaier said after exiting the infield care center. "That one's on me. I'm super disappointed for everybody involved.

"Not only did we wreck our day but a lot of the other competitors. Hate it for those guys. Hopefully we can get to Texas next week and rebound from it."

The wreck wiped out the Playoff point advantage Bell and Allgaier held at the start of the Round of 8. Bell, Allgaier and Cindric finished 37th, 38th and 39th, respectively.

"I didn't really see much of anything," Bell said of the accident. "Just kind of driving around there. Just heartbroken. This is one of my favorite race tracks we go to, and especially after the run I had last year (his first Xfinity win), this is the race that I was looking forward to

whenever we started the year back in February."

Bell nevertheless was well aware of the benefit his six series wins have given him, having entered the round with 44 Playoff points, five more than Allgaier.

"That's the beauty of this format," Bell said. "NASCAR's done such a great job at giving us something to race for during the regular season. We've done our job winning six races this year, so we've accumulated some bonus points, so hopefully that can carry us through this bad stretch here and maybe we can find ourselves in Victory Lane later on in this round.

"If not, hopefully the bonus points will get us there."

Cindric, who came to Kansas in eighth place and leaves in the same position, didn't have the luxury of a points cushion.

"I'm thankful to still be in the Playoffs and still have a shot," said Cindric. "I felt like we had a shot to win today. We'll move on, have a week to think about it, go to Texas. Looks like we're going to have to win (to advance)."

Hemric, who led 128 laps, leaves Kansas as the series leader, 23 points above the cut line. Allgaier dropped below the Playoff cut line behind Matt Tifft in fifth. Bell stayed one point to the good Tifft, who finished sixth on Saturday as one of eight drivers on the lead lap.

Elliott Sadler ran third to hold second in the standings, very much alive in his quest to win a first championship in his last season of full-time competition. Tyler Reddick, Sadler's JR Motorsports teammate, came home fourth and is third in the series standings.

Shane Lee finished a career-best fourth in his 10th start of the season.



John Hunter Nemechek (42) leads Dani9e Hemric through the turn at Kansas Speedway. (NIGEL KINRADE PHOTOGRAPHY photo)

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Tyler Ankrum Celebrates Sunoco Rookie of the Year Award

A rookie season that ended with four checkered flags, and a NASCAR K&N Pro Series East championship, puts Tyler Ankrum in an elite list of drivers.

Ankrum becomes just the sixth driver in K&N Pro Series East history to win both the Sunoco Rookie of the

Year and the championship in the same season. He joins William Byron (2015), Ben Rhodes (2014), Kyle Larson (2012), Ryan Truex (2009) and Joey Logano (2007) in the list of drivers who have accomplished the feat.

Byron, Larson and Logano are current competitors in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series; both Larson and Logano are in the 2018 Cup playoffs, while Byron is leading the Cup Sunoco Rookie of the Year standings after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series title last season. Rhodes qualified for the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series playoffs this season, and Truex, who is a two-time K&N East champion, qualified for the NASCAR Xfinity Series playoffs.

Ankrum completed his success driving for DGR-Crosley Racing.

"It was such a stellar year in my rookie year. I'm just so thankful for the year we had, and so thankful for David's call to come down to the shop," Ankrum said. "Those are guys that I look up to and to be part of that group and forever be a K&N champion... to say you want to do it is one thing, but to actually do it, it's an important feat."

He is recognized as the Sunoco Rookie of the Year after his dream season ended with him 94 points up on Anthony Alfredo. The San Bernardino, California, driver was the leading rookie contender in eight of the 13 races. Ryan Vargas was third.

"For me, beating those guys, they are in my age group and the guys I am battling with to make it to the next level," Ankrum said. "It gives me confidence that what we were doing all year was right and it goes to show that we had something really good going this year. It was the chemistry of the team and I together as one."

Ankrum points to the first race of the season, at New Smyrna

Speedway, as the start of the success. He started 25th in the opener but worked his way through the field and finished fifth in his first career start.



Ankrum

"Starting the year off the way we did was huge. It's hard starting off with a new team, but having the run we did at New Smyrna was an assurance to me, and my guys, and it gave the guys confidence in me. We had such a strong performance there and the guys were so impressed with how fast I took to the car and the track, that they were pumped for how things were going to go," Ankrum said.

"When we got the win and we decided to go full-time, it just took off from there. We were all having a ton of fun. We were always one of the cars to beat, and most of the time it was between and Tyler (Dippel). Having those performances early in the year really propelled us to our three wins in a row we had."

In a sense, accumulating points towards the K&N Pro Series East championship, and winning races, almost made Ankrum forget he was still a Rookie of the Year contender.

"I pressed so hard when it came to the points, and everyone told me not to chase the points, but in my mind I did. I told myself I was out there to win but that the points were valuable as well. Sometimes I lost sight of it when we just kept on worrying about the championship standings, I realized I was still worried about Rookie of the Year points."

As he looks to begin his climb up the ladder, Ankrum will make the next step in his career at Martinsville Speedway. He will make his NASCAR Camping World Truck Series debut with DGR-Crosley in the No. 54 May's Hawaii Toyota next Saturday.

"To have the opportunity with him (Gilliland) is huge, because the equipment is good in the Truck Series. David has probably been the most influential person in my career, he helped me get started in every next level," Ankrum said.

"When I was racing Midgets on the West Coast, I was best friends with Todd and David asked me what I wanted to do for the rest of my life and I told him I wanted to be

a Cup driver like him. He started getting me into Late Models, the K&N car, and now here we are moving into the Truck."

Ankrum, his DGR-Crosley team, and the rest of the NASCAR K&N Pro Series top finishers and special award winners will be honored at NASCAR Awards Charlotte on Friday, Dec. 7.

Tommy Catalano Clinches Sunoco Rookie Honors on Whelen Modified Tour

A decision to press forward through the summer months paid off for Tommy Catalano.

After missing the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour opener at South Carolina's Myrtle Beach Speedway, Catalano made his debut at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park in April, finishing 15th. At the time, his plan was to



Catalano

run select races in preparation for the 2019 season.

"It was more race by race, going into the year and missing Myrtle Beach, our plan was to run three of four races and get a hang of it. We were going to do it full out next year," Catalano said. "After we got to the eighth race, where we were locked in to go for the Rookie of the Year and we could not do it next year, we decided we were going to make a run at it and try to do it."

After 15 starts across seven months, Catalano is celebrating his decision. The Ontario, New York, driver clinched the Sunoco Rookie of the Year award on the Whelen Modified Tour, defeating Blake Barney by 26 points.

In his 15 races, Catalano scored a best finish of eighth at Seekonk Speedway in June, and also scored another top-10 at Oswego Speedway, one of few tracks on the circuit he was already familiar with. Before running on the Whelen Modified Tour, Catalano picked up multiple championships in the NASCAR Whelen All American Series in New York, including two in 2017. He also has been successful on the Race of Champions Modified circuit.

But, it was time to take his talent to the next level.

"I would say that it was definitely a fun experience and a little bit different than what we are used to," Catalano said. "With the RoC, we are familiar with the tracks we go

to, and it's nothing like the tour. The biggest thing was being well prepared when we got there. We wanted to be ready to go and not show up scrambling."

Although the early stages of the season didn't exactly go the way he was looking for, Catalano wasn't going to let that slow him down. In his first trip to Seekonk, Catalano started in the rear of the field, but worked his way through the pack in a race where pitting wasn't an option. He scored the eighth-place finish, and in a sense, that was a turning point for the family operation.

"We were in the mid 20s all day, time trialed in the 20s, and in the race we really didn't touch the car, and we ended up with a top-10 that day," Catalano said. "Staying on course was a huge factor in pulling off the Rookie of the Year."

When he mentions staying on course, he means the team used the same setup all day at the track, instead of trashing on the car and making wholesale adjustments.

"We never got off-course at the track. We went with something and whether it was good or bad, we stuck with it all day, we didn't make huge changes at the track because in the past, that is what got us in trouble," he said. "We made minor adjustments, but we didn't start back over. That definitely saved us in some spots. There were a few tracks we struggled at."

With the talent level on the Whelen Modified Tour at an all-time high, Catalano couldn't let this award pass him by. Fourteen different Rookie drivers took the green flag this season.

"In the middle of the year, you get to the point where you want things to turn around and get better, and they did," Catalano said. "In the end, it all paid off. We didn't have a lot of funding, but we used what we had and made the best of it."

For now, his plans for next season include returning to the Whelen Modified Tour, but his team is going to celebrate this accomplishment first.

"It's definitely going to make us smile every time we see that," Catalano said. "Hopefully we can build on that and next year's goal is going to be to crank inside the top-10 in points."

Catalano will be honored with the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour champion, Justin Bonsignore, and the rest of the top finishers and special award winners at the NASCAR Awards Charlotte on Friday, Dec. 7.

P.A.S.S.

PASS Commonwealth Classic Postponed

NAPLES, ME - The Pro All Stars Series (PASS) Commonwealth Classic originally scheduled for October 19-20 at Richmond Raceway (Richmond) has been postponed.

"While we are disappointed with the postponement of the event, we feel we have made the best decision for the series, teams, and our fans after looking at the unfavorable weather forecast and the distance many teams were scheduled to travel from the northeast, south, and Canada," said PASS President Tom Mayberry. "We look forward to continuing to work with the staff at Richmond Raceway to continue to promote this event on a new date in 2019."

Officials are currently looking at a new date of March 30, 2019 for the PASS Commonwealth Classic. This date will provide much more flexibility with scheduling if weather should once again become a factor. This date will be confirmed within the next few

weeks.

The Pro All Stars Series is recognized as North America's premier sanctioning body for asphalt Super Late Models and boasts such marquee events as the legendary Oxford 250 at Oxford Plains Speedway, PASS South's Easter Bunny 150 at the historic Hickory Motor Speedway, and the inaugural Commonwealth Classic at Richmond Raceway. For technical information concerning all PASS divisions please send questions to passracing@roadrunner.com. For media or marketing questions, please contact Alan Dietz at 704-231-2039 or alandietzpass@live.com. And, don't forget to "Like" the Pro All Stars Series on Facebook or follow us on Twitter @PASSML14 to keep up with breaking news as it happens.

PASS Mason-Dixon MegaMeltdown at Hickory To Be Broadcast on MAVTV

CHARLOTTE, NC - One of the Mid-Atlantic's oldest Super Late Model races will be making its way back into living rooms nationwide.

Pro All Stars Series (PASS) officials announced today that the 13th Annual Mason-Dixon MegaMeltdown 200 at the famed Hickory Motor Speedway will be broadcast on a tape-delayed basis on the MAVTV network as part of Speed51's Short Track America. And for the first time ever, highlights will also be included in the show of the MASS Street Stocks and Legends car races. This continues the relationship between PASS and MAVTV that began last year with Speed51's initial productions of the Oxford 250 and MegaMeltdown.

In 2017, this traditional North versus South showdown saw North Carolina's Brandon Setzer and Maine's Garrett Hall duke it out to the wire in front of the MAVTV cameras with Setzer taking a popular win in front of the hometown crowd.

"This has been the race to crown champions since 2006 and this year will be no different," said PASS President Tom Mayberry. "MAVTV's flag-to-flag coverage of the MegaMeltdown 200 will give short track racers and their sponsors the coverage that they so desperately deserve and we are glad that PASS can provide them with that."

To add even more excitement to this race, the MegaMeltdown will

serve as the final race of the 2018 battle for the PASS National Championship Series. And, it will once again see a champion crowned in the South's oldest Super Late Model division. This means that those watching on MAVTV will see drivers from both the north and south battling it out for bragging rights at "the birthplace of the NASCAR stars."

MAVTV, an American cable and satellite television channel owned by the automotive lubricant company Lucas Oil, has become the go-to channel for short track racing events in recent years.

The company produces full race broadcasts for series such as the ARCA Racing Series, Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series, the Lucas Oil American Sprint Car Series, Lucas Oil Modified Series and many more.

The addition of the Pro All Stars Series' Mason-Dixon MegaMeltdown to Speed51's Short Track America lineup further demonstrates the network's support of short track racing.

Speed51.com, the nation's leading short track racing news site, will handle the production of the television broadcast.

The air date for the Mason-Dixon MegaMeltdown will be announced at a later time.

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Sheldon Creed Caps 2018 ARCA Championship With Kansas Win

Sheldon Creed put a period on his ARCA Racing Series presented by Menards championship season with a comeback win in Friday's ARCA Kansas 150 at Kansas Speedway.

Creed (No. 28 United Rentals Toyota) was leading on lap 46 when he was

involved in an incident with a lapped car on lap 46. Creed's car was damaged on the driver's side, but quick work by crew chief Jeff Stankiewicz and the MDM Motorsports crew kept him on the lead lap and in contention.

Several late race cautions kept the field bunched, and Creed was able to pick up positions on restarts and on the short bursts of green flag racing.

Creed took the lead from defending race winner Michael Self (No. 15 Sinclair Lubricants Toyota) on a lap 86 restart, and held off Harrison Burton (No. 12 DEX Imaging Toyota) after a final restart with a handful of laps remaining.

"The car seemed to drive the same after the crash as it did before," Creed said. "I don't know that I can put all of the blame on that lapped car. I was coming up on him pretty fast and I don't think he knew I was going to be out there. The team did a great job patching it up as quickly as they could."

Burton fought to second despite an engine problem that kept the RPMs at 5000 while under caution.

"The throttle was sticking and holding the RPMs at 5000 under yellow, and it make it really challenging on restarts," Burton said.

Self held on for third despite losing a lot of track position in the final laps. Self was nearly collected in a couple of incidents throughout the night but was still a factor for the win late in the going.

"What I saw was just hard racing out there," Self said. "There were some close calls for us but we managed to make it through and were still up battling for the win. It's great that we were in a position to win twenty percent of the races we were entered in this year. We'd like to come back and do more of it next year."

The event was slowed eight times for various incidents, includ-

ing one that involved series runner-up Zane Smith (No. 41 LaPaz Margarita Mix/ICON Vehicle Dynamics Toyota). He crashed in turn three along with Gus Dean (No. 32 GREE Cooling Products/Baker Distributing Chevrolet) with 22 laps remaining. Smith unofficially finished 17th while Dean was unoffi-

cially 18th. Neither driver was injured.

Travis Braden (No. 27 Matrix-Care/Consonus Healthcare Ford) was also involved in a crash in turn one with Joe Graf, Jr. (No. 77 Big Tine Ford). Both were evaluated and released from the infield care center.

Drew Herring made his first series start in nine years and started from the General Tire Pole, but was involved in a spin on lap 64. He was credited with eighth at the finish.

There were seven lead changes among six drivers. The average speed was 90.812 miles per hour, and the time of race was one hour, 39 minutes, and 35 seconds. Creed's margin of victory was 0.942 seconds.

The ARCA Racing Series presented by Menards season is now complete.

The 2019 schedule should be released in the coming weeks, while the series awards banquet is scheduled for December 8 in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Sheldon Creed stands on his car in victory lane after winning Friday's ARCA Kansas 150 at Kansas Speedway. (arcaracing.com photo)

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Kunert Wins 2018 Senneker Performance Rookie of the Year Award

SALEM, IN - The ARCA/CRA Super Series Powered by JEGS concluded its 22nd season of competition this past Sunday in the running of the 47th Annual Winchester 400 Presented by Vore's Welding & Steel on the famous High Banks of Winchester Speedway. In that event, Austin Kunert concluded the 2018 season with another great performance, which helped earned him earn the 2018 Senneker Performance Rookie of the Year Award and a runner-up finish in the 2018 ARCA/CRA Super Series Chase for the Championship.

"For the 2018 season we had a few goals, to be the series Rookie of the Year, win a series race and to make the Chase and have a shot at winning the Championship, we accomplished all those goals with a great team effort," commented Kunert. "The year had a few ups and downs, but I felt we had a shot at a top five finish almost every time we unloaded."

The Batavia, Illinois came into the Winchester 400 with a good lead in the Senneker Performance Rookie of the Year points over fellow rookie and Chase competitor Jon Beach. Kunert had had a stellar season heading into the 400, he finished second to 2018 series Champion Josh Brock at Anderson Speedway on May 5th, and then picked up his first ever ARCA/CRA Super Series win at Kil-Kare Raceway on June 2nd. Kunert had six top 10 finishes, with four top five finishes at Baer Field Motorsports Park and the Labor Day Weekend event at Winchester Speedway.

Kunert added, "I had been looking forward to racing in the Winchester 400 for many years and finally got the chance this year. After the Labor Day race we knew we would be fast in the 400. It was really cool racing with some of the best drivers and being able to drive up from 10th to take the lead for 33 laps, that was really special. I think we had a good pit strategy going until we had the alternator fail and the battery go dead around lap 330 and had to pit as the field came to green. We wound up 11th in the race but were able to hold on to

second in the Chase standings."

"I would like to thank Lorz Motorsports for all their hard work this season and my Crew Chief & Spotter, Josh Nelms, we have learned to communicate well together and that shows at the track. I would also like to thank VanDoorn Racing Development for the great car and MEP for the great engines. I have to thank my Mom and Dad for letting me do what I love and God for watching over me. Also, I am lucky to have some great sponsors that helped make this happen: Blue Demon Welding Supplies, Custom Companies, Global Builders, Kunert Construction, QP Hydraulics, Xtreme Graphics & Superior Logistics. I enjoy racing with CRA and look forward to racing with them again in 2019!"

Kunert won the Senneker Performance Rookie of the Race Award a series leading six times during the 2018 season. Beach would finish in second in the Senneker Performance Rookie of the Year standings, fourth in the Chase for the Championship and was the Senneker Performance Rookie of the Race Award winner in two events. Carson Hocevar finished in third place in the Senneker Performance Rookie of the Year standings he was the Senneker Performance Rookie of the Race Award winner in three events.

At the 2018 CRA Awards Banquet on January 11th, Kunert will receive a \$500 cash bonus and a \$500 Product Certificate from Senneker Performance. Kunert will also receive a \$500 cash bonus and a Crosley Radio JukeBox Trophy from DGR-CROSLEY, the Official Racing Driver Development Team of CRA. Kunert will receive a race ready carburetor from VDL Fuel Systems, a Package A Body from Five Star RaceCar Bodies and several contingency product awards from several series sponsors.

As runner-up in the Senneker Performance Rookie of the Year standings, Beach will receive a \$200 Product Certificate from Senneker Performance and a \$300 cash bonus from Cometic Gasket. For his third place finish in the Senneker Performance Rookie of the Year standings Hocevar will receive a \$100 Product Certificate from Senneker Performance.

More information on the

ARCA/CRA Super Series Powered by JEGS is available at www.cra-racing.com.

Wimmer Motorsports Wins 2018 Outerwears Crew Chief of the Year Award

SALEM, IN - Wimmer Motorsports has won the Outerwears Crew Chief of the Year Award with the ARCA/CRA Super Series Powered by JEGS for the 2018 season. Wimmer Motorsports, with founder Chris Wimmer and Travis Sauter, were the Crew Chief tandem for Josh Brock, who was crowned the ARCA/CRA Super Series 2018 Champion the past Sunday in the 47th Annual Winchester 400. The Wisconsin natives teamed up during the season to help Brock get his first series win in May at Anderson Speedway, then guided him to his first ever CRA Championship.

The award was based upon the Chase for the Championship format that CRA used to determine its Champions again in 2018. The final four scheduled races were utilized to determine the Outerwears Crew Chief of the Year Award based upon a points system for the Chase teams finish in those four events.

Wimmer Motorsports accumulated 18 points over those four races. They were the highest finishing Chase team in the first Chase event at Kalamazoo Speedway on August 8th, third highest in the second Chase event on Labor Day at Winchester, bounced back to finish the highest in the third Chase event at Toledo Speedway on September 15th. The team finished highest for the third time in

the Chase events in last Sunday's Winchester 400 to claim the 2018 series Championship.

Josh Nelms, Crew Chief for Senneker Performance Rookie of the Year Austin Kunert, finished second in points for the Outerwears Crew Chief of the Year Award. He totaled 16 points over the four events, which included being the highest Chase finisher in the Winchester Labor Day event. Nelms' team finished second in the Championship Chase for the series.

Brent Jack, Crew Chief for son Hunter Jack, finished in third place in the Outerwears Crew Chief of the Year Award points, with a total of 13 points over the four Chase events. Jon Beach, Crew Chief for himself, finished in fourth place with nine points.

Wimmer Motorsports will be officially presented the 2018 Outerwears Crew Chief of the Year Award at the 2018 CRA Awards Banquet, which will be held at the Crowne Plaza Indianapolis Downtown at Union Station on Friday, January 11th, 2019. The award will include a \$1000 cash bonus and a trophy.

Based in Schoolcraft, Michigan, Outerwears has been on the track improving performance and creating champions since 1979. Designed using Terra-Flo technology Outerwears radiator screens provide the perfect balance between airflow and debris deflection, allowing peak airflow and longer radiator life. Outerwears radiator screens will be an important part of the ARCA/CRA Super Series for the 2017 race season. Ask your local dealer for your Outerwears or visit www.outerwears.com.

Schatz Hits 20-Win Mark for Sixth Consecutive Season with Dodge City Victory

DODGE CITY, KS - Donny Schatz passed Ian Madsen on Lap 9 in lapped traffic and held off Madsen's late race surge to win his 20th World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series of 2018, Saturday at Dodge City Raceway Park. Madsen, in his first visit to

Dodge City, settled for second with Daryn Pittman completing the podium.

Ian Madsen set a new Dodge City track record in Qualifying, won his Heat and the Sears Craftsman Dash to earn the pole for the 30-lap Feature. Madsen got a strong initial start to lead the opening lap. The Australian, who will be crowned as the 2018 Kevin Gobrecht Rookie of the Year at the years end, reached lapped traffic by the fourth circuit on the lightning-fast racing surface.

Madsen cleared the first slower car, but was held up by local Steven Richardson, allowing Schatz to close the gap. Madsen remained behind Richardson as Schatz got a strong run entering turn one to take the lead down the backstretch on the ninth circuit.

Schatz officially led the ninth lap before the caution flew for third-place running Sheldon Haudenschild. Haudenschild, who was also making his Dodge City debut, was able to return at the rear of the field.

The ensuing double-file restart saw Schatz and Madsen race away from the field, establishing themselves as the class of the field. Similar to Madsen early in the race, Schatz' pace slowed dramatically when he reached lapped traffic. Madsen closed in on the nine-time Series Champion, and took a look underneath for the lead, but couldn't complete the pass.

A sputtering Adam Gullion brought out the caution with 18 laps complete, giving the leaders a clear track. Two laps later, Jade Hastings blew up, setting up a ten-lap sprint to the finish.

Schatz and Madsen again pulled away from the field, as Kasey Kahne Racing teammates Daryn Pittman and Brad Sweet jockeyed for third. Schatz reached traffic and again was forced to slow his pace on the tacky racing surface. Madsen closed in once again but came

up .279 short, as Schatz took the Checkered Flag for the 20th time in 2018.

When asked about the difficulties of lapped traffic, Schatz said with a smile, "It's how I got the lead and it's how I almost lost it. They didn't do anything wrong, but it was definitely tough to get by them."

The win was Schatz and his Tony Stewart/Curb-Agajanian Racing No.15 team 20th win of the year, marking the sixth consecutive season they've reached that total. "It's a testament to how great this team is, but we're never satisfied. 20 wins isn't enough, 40 wins isn't enough, that's what makes this team so great," Schatz said about reaching the 20-win plateau.

"It's a privilege to be able to drive for this great team against the greatest drivers in the world at the nicest facilities in the country," Schatz said as a dual-compliment to the World of Outlaws competition and Dodge City Raceway Park.

Ian Madsen was obviously disappointed to not finish the job but remained in good spirits. "It was a great night for this KCP team, I had a lot of family and friends here tonight and our car owner was here as well, so it was great to have a good finish for all of them. I just read lapped traffic wrong, hopefully we can pick up a win here in the last two weeks," Madsen said.

Daryn Pittman, fresh off his Lakeside victory a night ago, completed the podium and continued his recent hot streak.

Brad Sweet and 12th-starting Brian Brown completed the top-five. Sam Hafertepe Jr. earned KSE Hard Charger honors, coming from last to 15th.

A chilly evening and good air had Dodge City Raceway Park in uncharted territory as 22 of the 23 cars signed in broke the 13-year-old track record. Ian Madsen's Quick Time was nearly a half-second quicker than the existing fastest lap. The World of Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series has two weekends left in its 40th Anniversary Season.

Pittman Convincingly Scores 9th Win of 2018 in FVP Platinum Battery Shootout

KANSAS CITY, KS - Daryn Pittman scored his ninth World of



Donny Schatz celebrates his 20th win of the season in victory lane at Dodge City Raceway Park. (Lonnie Wheatley photo)

Outlaws Craftsman Sprint Car Series Feature win of the season in convincing fashion, leading every lap of the FVP Platinum Battery Shootout at Lakeside Speedway. Donny Schatz extended his points lead with a runner-up finish and Sheldon Haudenschild completed the podium.

It was Pittman's 81st career World of Outlaws win and second at Lakeside with his prior triumph coming 15 years ago in 2003.

Pittman won the Sears Craftsman Dash to earn the pole for the 30-lap Feature, alongside Logan Schuchart. Pittman held off an early charge from Schuchart to take command of the field.

A fast racing surface allowed Pittman to reach lapped traffic on Lap 8. The Oklahoma veteran negotiated traffic well, before the lone caution flag of the Feature fell on Lap 12 as heartbreak struck second-place running Logan Schuchart. Schuchart smoked down the frontstretch before coming to stop in turn one, ending his evening.

Sheldon Haudenschild assumed second place alongside Pittman with Jason Sides and Donny Schatz in row two of the double-file restart.

Pittman powered away from the field with a strong restart as Haudenschild and Schatz waged war for the second spot with the nine-time and defending Series Champion taking the position for good on Lap 16.

Schatz narrowed Pittman's lead, but the Kasey Kahne Racing, Ionomy-sponsored No.9 remained proficient through traffic.

The best battle on the race track was between Jason Sides, Brad Sweet and Joey Saldana, aboard the Jason Johnson Racing No.41, as the trio utilized the entire the

Lakeside Speedway racing surface battling for the fifth position.

Back up front, Schatz continued to close in on Pittman, but time was running out. With five laps remaining, Pittman maintained good speed on the cushion as Schatz was a car-length lower than him, desperately trying to reel him in.

Pittman stayed strong up top and rode the cushion to victory, a mere .586 seconds ahead of Schatz.

"This place is always been a track I've enjoyed coming to. If your car is good, you can get by guys and as a racer that's all you can ask for," Pittman said speaking fondly of Lakeside Speedway.

"Hats off to my guys, my car was great. It was a lot of fun, lapped traffic was tight, but I could move around and maintain speed everywhere. Man, these wins are hard to come by. I've been doing this a long time and they never get easier," Pittman said with a smile next to his KKR No.9.

Schatz settled for second and kept things simple after the race, "That's the way it goes sometimes. We got ourselves up there to compete for the win but didn't get it. We'll try again tomorrow."

In his second career Lakeside appearance, Sheldon Haudenschild landed on the podium for the second consecutive year, finishing third.

Shane Stewart was strong all night and finished fourth with Joey Saldana finishing fifth in his debut aboard the JJR No.41.

Brad Sweet, Jason Sides, Ian Madsen, Kraig Kinser and Brent Marks completed the all-Outlaw top-ten.

Brock Zearfoss, in his Lakeside debut, earned KSE Hard Charger honors coming from the LCS to finish 11th.

Richards Banks \$100,000 DTWC Payday

PORTSMOUTH, OH - Josh Richards won his second straight Rhino Ag Dirt Track World Championship presented by Optima Batteries on Sunday afternoon at Portsmouth Raceway Park.

Richards took the lead on lap 22 from Brian Shirley and led the rest of the way to pick-up the \$100,000

first-place prize and his third Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series win of the season.

Jonathan Davenport; the newly crowned Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series National Champion; finished in second followed by Brandon Overton, Brandon Sheppard, and Zack Dohm.

Richards was elated in Lucas Oil Victory Lane, "It's an emotional day. I want to thank everyone at Best Performance Motorsports, especially Eric and Kelly Brock for giving me this opportunity. I'd also like to give a huge thank you to Randall Edwards, this is the third straight year that he has been the DTWC winner's crew chief. The same goes to Brad Ramsey, I'd like to thank him for working so hard all year long. I know there was a little rough stretch during the summer, but they kept working hard and kept their heads up. To win the first and the final race of the year I have to thank my dad [Mark Richards] and all my sponsors."

"I knew it would be critical to get the lead early," Richards added. "I knew I'd also spun my tires early on trying to get by Shirley. I wanted to get out front as early as I could because of the restarts. I didn't know where Jonathan was. I wasn't sure when to pick the throttle up. He [Davenport] gave me a lot of room. He and his team did a great job to win the championship. We did what we came here for, and we won the last race of the season. Thanks to Carl Short and everyone here at this facility for working so hard for this race."

Davenport clinched the championship before the series' final race at Portsmouth. He commented afterwards on his runner-up finish in the season finale. "I think the top three cars all ran different tire combinations. There were a couple of restarts where we got a run on Josh to challenge for the lead. I

could have gone in there and door-slammed him, but I got a feeling we are going to be racing with each other for several years. All three of us had fast cars, but Josh was just more dominant today."

Overton claimed third and was happy about his podium finish as well. "I felt like we were good at the end. I don't know if we had anything for Josh, but we hung right in there with JD. By the time we got to third there wasn't a whole lot of racing left, so all-in-all, another crown jewel race and another top five finish for the Billy Franklin team."

The winner's Eric and Kelly Brock-owned Rocket Chassis is powered by an Andy Durham Racing Engine and sponsored by: Colt Firearms, Bulk Material Lift.com, Valvoline, Bazell Race Fuels, Keyser Manufacturing, Boxo USA, Integra, Sunoco Race Fuels, Alexander Lawn and Landscaping, and Impact Race Gear.

Completing the top ten were Mike Marlal, Don O'Neal, Earl Pearson Jr., Jimmy Owens, and Chase Junghans.

Shirley and Davenport Share DTWC Front Row

PORTSMOUTH, OH - Brian Shirley and Jonathan Davenport will make up the front row for the 38th Annual Rhino Ag Dirt Track World Championship presented by Optima Batteries at Portsmouth Raceway Park.

Friday night's Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series event saw two rounds of passing point heats. Shirley and Davenport, the 2018 Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series National Champion, earned the two highest point totals to earn their coveted starting spots for Saturday night's \$100,000 to win main event.

The first heat on Friday night saw the 2011 DTWC winner, Don O'Neal charge from his third starting position to win the race. O'Neal took the lead from Jason Jameson as he pulled away for the win. Jared Hawkins; who finished fifth in last year's DTWC; finished in second, followed by Boom Briggs and Jameson.

The second heat in round one saw another third-place starter charge to the front and the win. Ricky Thornton, Jr.; who is subbing for Hudson O'Neal; took the lead from Delmas Conley and then stormed away for the victory. Gregg



Josh Richards celebrates his second straight Dirt Track World Championship at Portsmouth Raceway. Richards took the lead on lap 22 and never looked back for the win Sunday afternoon. (lucasdirt.com photo)

Satterlee came from fifth to finish in second-place, with seventh-place starter Bobby Pierce coming home in third. Chris Ferguson was fourth at the finish.

The third heat in the first round went to Brian Shirley as he bolted to the lead from his outside front row starting spot. Shirley pulled away for the win. Dennis Erb Jr. finished in second with Darrell Lanigan and Chase Junghans completing the top four.

In heat number four, Dale McDowell became the first pole sitter to win a heat. He took the lead at the start of the race and led the entire distance. Zack Dohm; who started alongside McDowell in row number one; finished in second followed by 2018 Portsmouth Raceway Park Late Model track champion, Eddie Carrier Jr. Josh Richards, the defending DTWC winner, came through the field to finish fourth after starting tenth.

The final heat race of round one belonged to Mike Marlal, who grabbed the lead at the start of the race and went unchallenged for the win. Jonathan Davenport came from fifth to take second behind Marlal at the finish. Doug Drown was third with World 100 winner, Tim McCreddie taking fourth.

The second round of heat races began with Josh Richards and two-time DTWC victor, Brandon Sheppard on the front row. The two had a spirited battle for the lead in the early going until

Sheppard pulled away. Richards finished in second with Robbie Scott edging out Boom Briggs at the finish line to claim third. Briggs was fourth.

The second heat race of round two was taken by three-time DTWC winner, Scott Bloomquist who pulled away from Devin Moran to get the victory. Moran placed second followed by Tim McCreddie and Jared Hawkins.

In heat number three of round two, the 2018 Hillbilly Hundred winner, Brandon Overton held off Jason Covert for the win. Covert crossed the line in second with Eddie Carrier Jr. and Gregg Satterlee trailing.

The fourth heat saw the 2018 Boone Coleman Memorial Gator 50 winner, Brandon Fouts pulled the upset defeating Jonathan Davenport at the line were Dennis Erb Jr. and Kyle Bronson. Erb passed Bronson at the flagstand to get third on the final lap.

The fifth and final heat of the night saw another home-track racer Shannon Thornsberry pick up the win over 2007 DTWC winner, Chub Frank. Brian Shirley and Ricky Thornton Jr. completed the top four.



ASCS Southwest Win Goes To Jesse Baker at Canyon Speedway Park

PEORIA, AZ - Putting his Jackson Compaction No. 22 in Victory Lane Friday night at Canyon Speedway Park, New Mexico's Jesse Baker picked up his fourth career win with the ASCS Southwest Region.

Going into the re-draw fifth in passing point standings, Baker drew the right of the front row and took full advantage at the one-third mile Arizona oval. Picking up two spots before it was all said and done, Rick Ziehl crossed second with Billy Chester slipping from pole to show. Having to charge from the back after a spin, J.T. Imperial crossed fourth with Jarrett Martin fifth.

Mason Keefer sixth was followed by Nick Parker. A regular in Non-Wing competition, Bruce St. James continues to get laps with wings on, netting an eighth-place finish. Steve Cushman and Alex Pettas made up the field.

Up next for the ASCS Southwest Region is a feast of a weekend as the Copper Classic hits Thanksgiving weekend at Arizona Speedway in Queen Creek, Ariz. \$2,000 to win on November 23, the following day ups the winner's bounty to \$5,000.

For other news, notes, and information on the American Sprint Car Series log onto www.ascsracing.com.

ing.com, follow on Facebook, on Instagram, and on Twitter.

Continued Rain Cancels Devil's Bowl Winter Nationals

MESQUITE, TX - With rain continuing to fall and no relief in sight,

officials with the Devil's Bowl Speedway have made the tough decision to cancel this weekend's 45th Winter Nationals with the Lucas Oil American Sprint Car Series presented by Sawblade.com.

The event will not be rescheduled.

The Steve King Charity Golf Tournament has also been canceled and will take place on Thursday, March 14, 2019, ahead of the 46th Devil's Bowl Spring Nationals on Friday, October 15 and Saturday, October 16.

The next event for the Lucas Oil American Sprint Car Series presented by Sawblade.com will be the John Christner Trucking Fall Fling at Creek County Speedway in Sapulpa, Okla. on Friday, October 26 and Saturday, October 27. Both nights begin at 7:00 P.M. (CT).

Event information can be found online at www.creekcountyspeedway.co or by calling (918) 693-RACE.

For other news, notes, and information log onto www.ascsracing.com.



Jesse Baker races his way to victory lane at Canyon Speedway Park. It was Baker's 4th career win with the ASCS. (Image Credit: Ben Thrasher photo)

Finalists Announced for The NASCAR Foundation's 8th Annual Betty Jane France Humanitarian Award

DAYTONA BEACH, FL - NASCAR announced the four finalists for The NASCAR Foundation's eighth annual Betty Jane France Humanitarian Award on Sunday at Kansas Speedway.

The award, named in honor of the foundation's late founder and chairwoman, honors NASCAR fans who are also accomplished volunteers working for children's causes in their communities throughout the United States.

The award winner will be determined via an online fan vote today through Nov. 19 at 5 p.m. (ET) at NASCARfoundation.org/Award. The winner will be announced on Nov. 29 during the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Awards at Wynn Las Vegas. The NASCAR Foundation will donate \$25,000 to the charities represented by the award finalists, with the winner's charity receiving a \$100,000 donation.

Here are the four finalists:

- Carl Dakes of Harwood, Maryland, an 18-year volunteer representing the Believe In Tomorrow

Children's Foundation, Inc. of Catonsville, Maryland. The foundation provides hospital and respite housing services to critically ill children and their families.

- Sarah Kersey of Dublin, Ohio, a cancer survivor who represents Flying Horse Farms in Mt. Gilead, Ohio. The facility, where Kersey has served as a volunteer since 2010, provides transformative camp experiences for children with serious illnesses, at no cost.

- Cliff Preston of Gainesville, Florida, representing UF Health Shands. He has volunteered for more than 25 years as a "cuddler" to soothe hospitalized newborns in the NICU during a parent's absence.

- Rex Reynolds of Hazel Green, Alabama, representing the Boys & Girls Clubs of North Alabama. Reynolds grew up participating in club programs and has now served in a volunteer role for 13 years.

"This year's stellar group of finalists consists of loyal longtime NASCAR fans who also are outstanding people," said The NASCAR Foundation Chairman Mike Helton. "Each of these individuals demonstrates, on a daily basis, true commitment and passion for their causes. Their good works are exactly the sort of volunteerism Betty Jane France wanted to spotlight, when the award was created."

Since the award's inception, The NASCAR Foundation has impacted the lives of more than 260,000 children by providing more than \$1.2 million in contributions to charities represented by finalists for the award.

To learn more about The NASCAR Foundation's Betty Jane France Humanitarian Award and to cast your vote for the 2018 finalists, visit www.NASCARfoundation.org/Award.

Charlotte Motor Speedway

CONCORD, NC - Charlotte Motor Speedway elves are breaking out the trees, tinsel, ornaments and lights in preparation for a holiday light show extravaganza like no other. Speedway Christmas presented by Disconnect & Drive returns Nov. 18 with over three million lights totaling 3.75 miles around the speedway, infield and concourse. Mother

Goose, Rapunzel and The Three Little Pigs come to life in this year's "Storybook in Lights" theme that will illuminate the iconic race track.

Disconnect & Drive, an initiative by AAA Carolinas Foundation for Traffic Safety, has partnered with Charlotte Motor Speedway to offer fans safe, family-friendly holiday fun. AAA Carolinas Foundation for Traffic Safety is committed to raising awareness of the dangers of distracted driving, especially handheld cell phone use behind the wheel.

"Charlotte Motor Speedway's Speedway Christmas light show is a time-honored tradition, recognized throughout the Carolinas for family fun, much like how AAA Carolinas is known for keeping families safe," said Tiffany Wright, public relations manager for AAA Carolinas. "We are thrilled to be partnering with Charlotte Motor Speedway on Speedway Christmas presented by Disconnect & Drive to encourage everyone to have a safe holiday season and to urge motorists to put down their cell phones while driving."

Building on the fan-friendly holiday atmosphere, this year's Speedway Christmas presented by Disconnect & Drive – which runs until Dec. 31 but is closed on Christmas Day – will also feature an infield Christmas village with an all-new 50-foot Ferris wheel, Bethlehem village, children's games and photos with Santa. Additionally, fans can sit in their cars and cozy up to Movie Nights on the giant Speedway TV every Thursday-Sunday.

The Speedway Christmas presented by Disconnect & Drive movie schedule includes:

- 17-18 "Home Alone"
- 22-25 "The Santa Clause"
- 29- Dec. 2 "The Polar Express"
- 6-9 "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation"

- 13-16 "The Star"
- 20 - 24 - "Frosty's Winter Wonderland, Mickey's Christmas Carol, The Grinch (1966)"

- 26 - 30 - "Home Alone"

Serving as a prelude to the ninth annual Speedway Christmas presented by Disconnect & Drive, the Egg Nog Jog 5K, a high-energy fun run to kick off the holiday festivities with hundreds of runners taking to the speedway's spectacular infield course will take place Nov. 17.

TICKETS: Fans can buy tickets to the Speedway Christmas lights show, which start at just \$20, by calling 1-800-455-FANS (3267), or click here. Fans are encouraged to register early for the Egg Nog Jog 5K by visiting <http://eggnogjog5k.com/register/>. Speedway Christmas Tickets are also available at the speedway ticket office.

On Tuesday nights, AAA Carolinas members receive \$5 off a regularly priced Speedway Christmas presented by Disconnect & Drive ticket by showing their AAA Carolinas membership card.

KEEP TRACK: Fans can connect with Charlotte Motor Speedway by following on Twitter and Instagram or become a Facebook fan. Keep up with all the latest news and information with the Charlotte Motor Speedway mobile app.

Daytona Int' Speedway

DAYTONA BEACH, FL - Daytona International Speedway will hold an Open House on Sunday, Nov. 4, giving the Central Florida community an opportunity to explore the state-of-the-art facility.

The Open House will take place between 1 p.m. – 6 p.m. and is free of charge. Fans are encouraged to RSVP to www.daytonainternationalspeedway.com/OpenHouse and can also walk-up the day of the event.

Fans can check out the amenities inside the venue with guided tours of the Axalta Injector, Trioval Club, start/finish line seating, Harley J's and Rolex 24 Lounge hospitality venues and the Tower roof.

"The Open House is a great opportunity for current ticket holders to visit areas that they haven't seen previously as well as guests who have not been to the facility since the completion of the \$400 million renovation project in 2016," Daytona International Speedway President Chip Wile said. "We're looking forward to visiting with the community and showing off the 'World Center of Racing.'"

The Rolex 24 Lounge and Harley J's, two of the Speedway's premium hospitality experiences, will have the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series playoff race from Texas Motor Speedway on televisions and will be serving light snacks and beverages.

The Harley J. Earl DAYTONA 500 champion's trophy will be on display for photo opportunities and there will be special giveaways including VIP experiences, race tickets and autographed items.

Tickets will be on sale for future Daytona International Speedway events including the 61st annual DAYTONA 500 and the 57th anniversary of the Rolex 24 At DAYTONA. Staff will be on-site to view seating areas that are currently available with guests.

Parking is available in the Midway outside the Axalta Injector.

Fans can stay connected with Daytona International Speedway on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and Snapchat, and by downloading Daytona International Speedway's mobile app, for the latest Speedway news throughout the season.

Atlanta Motor Speedway

HAMPTON, GA - Atlanta Motor Speedway's grandstands will open free of charge for fans who want to see NASCAR's 2019 racing package on the famous 1.54-mile oval for the first time during a Goodyear tire test on October 30.

The grandstands will be open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. as select NASCAR Monster Energy Cup Series drivers test the new racing package that will make its debut in the Folds of Honor QuikTrip 500 on Feb. 24, 2019. Fans attending the test will enter the grandstands through Gate 15.

During the test session concessions will be available and AMS Insider's Club members will have access to the Restart Bar. Atlanta Motor Speedway's souvenir stand will also be open, featuring several items on sale including 2019 Folds of Honor QuikTrip 500 event t-shirts for just \$5 for test day only.

Fans that don't already have 2019 Atlanta NASCAR weekend tickets yet can see what the view of the track is like from their seat of choice. AMS ticket staff will be on hand to help fans find the best seat, as well as offer tours of track suits and Club One.

Tickets for the 2019 Folds of Honor QuikTrip 500 can be purchased by con-

tacting Atlanta Motor Speedway at (770) 946-4211, (877) 9-AMS-TIX or by visiting www.atlantamotor-speedway.com.

ISM Raceway

PHOENIX, AZ - ISM Raceway announced today that Whelen Engineering will serve as the title sponsor of the NASCAR Xfinity Series semifinal playoff race at ISM Raceway on Saturday, November 10th.

The Whelen Trusted to Perform 200 will be the first Xfinity Series race officially held at the track following its two-year, \$178 million modernization project, part of Opening Weekend on November 9, 10 and 11. The sponsorship marks a continued commitment to the modernization of ISM Raceway by Whelen, which has also been heavily involved in the development of the lighting system for the new, cactus-shaped flag stand which will mark the new location of the start/finish line.

"Whelen has been a great partner within the industry and they have been amazing to work with as we put the finishing touches on our new venue," said Scott Rovn, Vice President of Sales and Communications at ISM Raceway. "We're thrilled that they have signed on as the title sponsor for this year's Xfinity Series semifinal race, the Whelen Trusted to Perform 200."

Based in Chester, Conn., Whelen Engineering designs and manufactures high-quality audio and visual warning equipment for Automotive, Aviation, and Mass Notification industries worldwide and employs more than 1,500 people at its facilities in Chester and Charlestown, N.H. Whelen has supported NASCAR for more than 25 years through numerous activations.

"We've always been about innovation, both within our products and within our partnerships," said Peter Tiezzi, General Manager of Motorsports at Whelen. "The new ISM Raceway is the epitome of innovation in motorsports venues, and we could think of no place better to hold the very first Whelen Trusted to Perform 200."

Tickets are available online at ISMRaceway.com, by phone at 1-866-408-RACE (7223) or in person at the ISM Raceway ticket office.



Hickory Motor Speedway

It was early morning rain, but a beautiful afternoon for racing.

After a great year of NASCAR Whelen All-American Series Racing at Hickory Motor Speedway the season would wind down to one last race for points, and that being the biggest race of the year, the Cosmo Motors FALL BRAWL presented by Calico Coatings, Cargo Transporters, and

NAPA. Over 400 laps of racing action would decide who would bring home the prestigious hardware and who would be crowned 2018 Hickory Motor Speedway Track Champions.

The Carolina Custom Golf Carts 4-Cylinders would roll off for their season ending battle. Brian Mundy in the #6 would grab the pole position with the fast lap in qualifying while Dennis Ward in the #25 would start to the outside of row one. Ward would move to the front at the start and would stay there for several laps. The caution would fly on lap 5 as Cody Combs in the #9 would spin and collect Nathaniel Kanupp in the #17. Kirby Gobble would make an appearance in the #78 and would move to the lead on lap twelve. The caution would fly on lap sixteen when Derek Ward in the #29 would spin on the backstretch. Gobble would see pressure from Mundy over the closing laps. Mundy would muscle around for the lead with just two laps to go and put an exclamation point on his championship season taking the checkered flag. Gobble would hang on for 2nd with Dennis Ward finishing 3rd. Randy Canipe in the #09 and Dennis Trivette in the #28 rounded out the top 5.

Brian Mundy would win the battle and the war, taking the 2018 Hickory Motor Speedway Carolina Custom Golf Carts 4-Cylinders Track Championship.

The Paramount Auto Group Limited Late Models would roll off next for 100 laps and the final round of the Paramount Kia 'Big 10' Chase for the Championship. Gage Painter in the #12 would take the top spot in qualifying with the #14 of Vince Midas qualifying second fast. Filling out row two would be Landon Huffman in the #71 and Pat Rachels in the #34. Painter and Midas would battle furiously for the top spot until Midas would nose



Josh Berry is all smiles as he celebrates in the victory lane at Hickory Motor Speedway after winning the annual Fall Brawl. (SHERRI STEARNS photo)

ahead on lap 5. The field would race hard but clean and stay green until a spin on lap 34 by the #13 of Richard Caldwell would bring out the caution. Midas would take the lead as the caution would once again fly on lap 35 as the #92 of Taylor Nesbitt would spin. Midas and Painter would once again battle for the lead with Midas nosing ahead for the top spot. Lap 46 would see Huffman bring his ride to pit road with mechanical issues giving up his third place running position. Lap 50 would see the caution flag fly as Nesbitt and the #00 of Andy Holt would make contact and spin. Midas and Painter would battle hard for the lead with Painter gaining the edge this time. The caution would fly once again on lap 63 with Don Carlton in the #84 and Jessica Cann in the #19 spinning in turn one. Painter would nose ahead on the restart and move back to the point. A hard crash on lap 82 would bring out the caution once again with the #21 of Monty Cox and Nesbitt making contact. Cox would be finished for the evening while Nesbitt would make it back onto the track. Painter would move to the point once again but the caution would soon fly on lap 84 with the #71 of Nathan Lineback and Holt making contact and spinning. On the restart Painter would fight off pressure from Midas and once again resume the lead. Painter would hang on for the closing laps and take the win. Midas would hold on for 2nd with Rachels taking 3rd. Brandon Lemke in the #22 would finish 4th while Cody DeMarmels in the #18 would finish 5th.

Pat Rachels would hold off the youngsters and take the 2018 Hickory Motor Speedway Paramount

Auto Group Limited Late Models Track Championship.

Gage Painter, in a very tightly fought battle, would take 2018 Hickory Motor Speedway Paramount Kia 'Big 10' Championship.

Coming into the final skirmish the top three One Design Super Truck drivers at the top of the points standings had a chance to take the top spot and bragging rights for the off-season. Clint Fields in the #16 would make a rare 2018 Hickory Motor Speedway visit and set the fast time and start from the point with Allen Huffman in the #51 to his outside. Dakota Slagle in the #13 and Sheflon Clay in the #15 would make up row two. Fields would pull ahead of Huffman for the lead. Huffman would get shuffled back several spots before settling in behind the #26 of Charlie Neill, in a battle that could have major points ramifications. The caution would fly on lap 13 as Neill would go way high in turns 1 & 2 and come to a stop in turn 3. Neill and Huffman would both come down pit road for service and rejoin the field. On the restart Fields would move to the point once again while Sparks would fly from under Neill's truck bringing him back to pit road and possibly dashing his championship hopes. Slagle would pressure Fields waiting for him to make a mistake so he could pounce to the lead. Lap 41 would see the caution fly as Slagle would get loose coming off turn 4 and spin down the front stretch. Fields and Clay would battle hard on the restart until Fields would finally pull to the lead. Fields would hold on and grab the checkered flag. Slagle would move back up to finish 2nd with Clay coming home in 3rd. Huffman would bounce back to finish 4th

and Josh Stark would finish 5th. After a season full of hard fought battles.

Allen Huffman would take home the 2018 Hickory Motor Speedway One Design Super Truck Track Championship.

The feature event would be up next with the NASCAR Whelen All American Series Late Models hitting the track for 200 laps in the Cosmo Motors FALL BRAWL presented by Calico Coatings, Cargo Transporters, and NAPA. Josh Berry in the #88 would take the top spot with a hot lap of 14.878 while Jacob Heafner in the #95 would start outside of the front row just a fraction of a second behind. Row two would be made up of past Hickory Motor Speedway Track Champion Austin McDaniel in the #12 and Ty Gibbs in the #18. However, with the addition of the MTP Tire & Racing Center, LLC challenge the pole sitter could win an additional \$1000 or 2nd through 5th could win an additional \$500 if any of them were to accept the challenge, start from the rear and win the race to win the additional money, Berry and the #31 of Thomas Beane would both accept the challenge, moving to the rear. Heafner and McDaniel would make row one for the start with Gibbs and Justin Crider in the #7 making up row two. McDaniel would get the better start and take initial lead with Heafner close behind in his tire tracks. Lap 10 would see the caution fly as Beane and the #15 of Bryson Dennis would spin in turns 1 and 2. McDaniel and Heafner would battle door to door for several laps until McDaniel would once again nose out into the lead. Heafner would put pressure on McDaniel for the top spot and move by for the lead on lap 21. Berry would work his way diligently through the field after taking the MTP Tire Challenge and break into the top 10 on lap 35 and into the top 5 on lap 51. The caution would fly on lap 57 as the #32 of Nik Williams would spin in turn 4. McDaniel would nose ahead on the restart and bring the #9 of Sam Mayer along with him to second. The caution would fly again on lap 76 as the left front fender from the #55 of Zach Bruenger would tumble down the front stretch. On the restart several cars would receive damage and bring the caution back out. Justin Crider in the #7 would come to pit road for repairs, but quickly rejoin the field. Mayer would win the side by side battle with McDaniel on the restart to pace the field at the point. Mayer

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would lead at the halfway point when the caution flag would fly bringing the action to a halt for a brief 10 minute intermission and two Hoosier F-45 tires. Mayer would lead, McDaniel in 2nd, Berry in 3rd, Heafner in 4th, and Gibbs in 5th. Beane, who also took the MTP Tire Challenge has worked his way up to 7th at the halftime break. McDaniel would get the

better restart and lead several laps until Mayer would move back around to resume the lead. Lap 119 would see Beane pull to the pits and park with mechanical issues, ending a good run that saw him working his way through the field. Caution would fly on lap 125 as contact between the #23 of Terry Brooks and the #29 of Mitch Walker would see both cars slow on the track. After a quick pit stop both cars would continue. On the restart Mayer and McDaniel would resume their battle for the top spot. Mayer would eventually nose ahead for the top spot and his JR Motorsports teammate, Berry, would follow him for second on lap 143. Lap 158 would see Berry make move around Mayer for the top spot as laps were running out. Mayer wouldn't go quietly as he would shadow Berry's every move. As the laps would count down Berry's lead would grow as he would drive on to take the win. Mayer would hold on for 2nd with McDaniel taking 3rd. Heafner would finish 4th and Bruenger would come home in 5th.

Jacob Heafner would take his hotrod to the 2018 Hickory Motor Speedway Late Model Track Championship.

Rounding out the night's action would see the Cosmo Motors Street Stocks hit the track for 30 laps of battle. Mark Johnson in the #28 would make his 2018 debut and start from the point after setting the fast lap in qualifying while Hickory Motor Speedway points leader Troy DeMarmels in the #18 would start to the outside of the front row. Johnson would move to the early lead with DeMarmels close behind. The battle would rage throughout the field with the #4 of Todd Bradbury starting shotgun on the field and working his way up to 5th place before lap 10. The race would stay green all the way to the checkers and see Johnson return to Victory

Lane. DeMarmels would hold on for 2nd and Mark Whitten in the #77 would grab 3rd. Bradbury would move up to 4th and Tyler Gallup in the #8 would finish 5th.

Troy DeMarmels would complete a great season returning to racing action by taking the 2018 Hickory Motor Speedway Cosmo Motors Street Stocks Track Championship.

Next week, October 27th, the Southeast Super Trucks come to town for an evening of action packed Racing.

In three weeks, November 10th, the PASS Series invades America's Most Famous Short Track with the running of the Mason-Dixon Melt-down 200.

For more info check us out at www.hickorymotorspeedway.com, on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Carteret County Speedway

SWANSBORO, NC – Bobby Watson, the owner of Carteret County Speedway, a father, and a grandfather, passed away late Thursday evening at the age of 66.

Watson has been on hospice care and was showing signs of health improvement prior to Thursday. However, on Thursday evening around 7:15pm EST, Watson passed away at his home at the racetrack.

"We are saddened to confirm the death of track owner Bobby Watson," Carteret County Speedway public relations director Andy Marquis said. "Bobby was a great man and a great track owner. The entire racing community will mourn him."

Watson was a native of North Carolina, born in Durham with a

love for stock car racing. He became the promoter of a go-kart track in Rougemont and also built the Carteret County Speedway kart track in the later part of the 20th Century while also owning and operating Watson Land Clearing. In the early 2000s, Watson began to build a new dream, short track racing's field of dreams.

In 2015, Carteret County Speedway reopened, after nearly a decade of construction, as a pavement short track. However, it was more than just opening the track Watson dreamed of, it was becoming the premier track. In 2018, Carteret County Speedway became that premier track, hosting the CARS Tour and two other big Limited Late Model events, generating unrivaled buzz.

Watson became loved by racers and the community around him for his positive attitude, his relentless work ethic and his love for country. The work was never done at Carteret County Speedway for Watson, and the love of country is easily displayed through the more than 100 American flags that fly on the racetrack's property.

Bobby Watson is survived by two sons, Bobby Watson, Jr and Cam Watson, grandchildren Carter Watson and Frankie Watson, brothers Ronnie Watson and Larry Watson, and girlfriend Scarlett Scott.

A victory celebration was held for Bobby on Saturday, October 20th at Carteret County Speedway.

For more information about Carteret County Speedway, visit the track's official website at www.carteretspeedway.com, "like" Carteret County Speedway on Facebook or follow @carteretcoswy on Twitter.

Antioch Speedway

MORGANTON, NC - Antioch held a special 2 day event called Halloween havoc friday night had two main event here are the results. Paul Butler #B4 from Morganton lead every lap on his way to Victory in the super stock 4 race. Trent Chatham #9 second, Trevor Chatham #00 third, Eddie Burks #71 fourth and Jessica Mendenhall #44 fifth.

Chris Butler #B9 from Morganton won a very competitive Pure Stock 4 (Gary Oliver Memorial) race. Mason Pugh #22 second, Patrick Annas #6 third, Mike Gatton #M7 fourth and Jerry Oliver #44jr rounded out the top five.

Matthew Nance #4 from Elkin set on the pole and won the Blue Ridge Outlaw late model race [driving a ford] Saturday night. 12 year old Bryson Harper #20H looked impressive coming home in 2nd Place. Rickie Weeks #1W led the 1st 11 laps until he cut a right front tire down when he caught slower traffic in turn 2, and still manage to come from the rear and pass David Minton 3D at the checkered flag for third. Minton fourth and Travis Greer #11G fifth.

John Reynolds #55 LED flag to flag winning the Renegade/ Crate sportsman event. Rodney Lail #26 finished a strong second, Duck Rowland 98s third, Ronald Rhodes #23 fourth and Randy Young #21R fifth.

Andrew Durham #0 from Jonesville easily won the Blue Ridge Outlaw 602 modified race. Ritchie Watson #80 second, Zack Tate #T9 third, Buck Stevens #23 fourth and Mike Fain #4 fifth.

Shorty Lacey #19 led the last 5 laps and withstood a post-race motor teardown to win the Thunder bombers event. Tim Moretz #M1 led the first 6 laps until he developed steering problems on his racer and was sidelined the rest of the event. Lacey took the point and led the final laps to take the victory. Matt Prince #19P second, Andy Ledford third, Mike Baucom #97B fourth and Tieler Dodge #11 fifth.

Everett Dunlap #50 from Concord inherited the win after the apparent winner was disqualified at post-race inspection in the Super street division. Jason Ledford #14 led the last 5 laps but was found to have been running illegal heads and was disqualified relegating the win to Dunlap. Chris Dunlap #5 passed Duke Bare #52 with 4 laps reminding to finish second, Bare third, Jeff Does #21 fourth and Ray Rowland #38 fifth.

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Bobby Watson (left) and girlfriend Scarlett (right) at Carteret County Speedway prior to a 2017 race. (ANDY MARQUIS photo)

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Chris Butler #B9 from Morganton made the pass on the outside in turn 2 and went on to easily win the Pure Stock 4 event. Jerry Oliver #62 second, Patrick Annas #6 third, Randy Powell #88 fourth and Jesse Troutman #33 rounded out the top five.

David Laney #½ only LED 3 laps to win the extreme front wheel drive race.

Timmy Wilson #7 took the lead on lap 6 but only led 7 laps when his engine blew sidelining him for the evening. Willie Flawler #12X took the point on lap 13 but slowed late allowing Laney to take the lead and go on to take the checkered flag, Flawler held on to finish second, Kevin Saam #41 third, Kayla Surber 3B fourth and Ray Tony #01 fifth.

Colby Burks #73 from Morganton won the Young Guns race. Matthew Wallace #½ second, Cody Verbos 01 third, Gracie Gatton #G7 fourth and Jacob Hayes #0 fifth.

Keylon Tate #15T won the pure stock V8 race, Chris Edwards #17 second.

Stafford Motor Speedway

STAFFORD SPRINGS, CT - After driving in Stafford Speedway's Street Stock, Limited Late Model, and SK Light divisions from 2010-2017, David Arute made the move into the premier SK Modified® division for the 2018 season with the goal of winning the NAPA Auto Parts Rookie of the Year title. Arute and the #75 Big Haus USA team won not only the SK Modified® Rookie of the Year award, but they were also the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series Division 1 Connecticut state Rookie of the Year. Both awards bring with it a \$1,000 bonus.

"It's definitely an accomplishment to be the NAPA Auto Parts Rookie of the Year in the SK Modifieds®," said Arute. "One of my main goals for the season was to win the Rookie of the Year in both the SK Modifieds® and the National Rookie of the Year in Connecticut. I didn't win a race this year but Rookie honors is like a win, it's a good starting point for next season."

Arute came into the SK Modified® division with a racing resume that was filled with success. Arute had finished in the top-5 of the SK



There was a crowd to help winner Matthew Nance (center) celebrate his win. (ANTIOCH SPEEDWAY photo)

light and Limited Late Model points standings every year since 2013 with a total of 12 feature wins in that same time span as well as winning the 2011 Wild Thing Karts Sr. Outlaws championship. The introduction to the SK Modified® division for Arute proved to be a stiffer challenge than he expected.

"I knew it was going to be difficult," said Arute. "I didn't expect to come in and be a superstar, I had a lot to learn. In the SK Modified® division, you have to be spot on every single week. You can't miss a single thing because the guys in this division are all veterans and they know the tricks of what to do in July and what to do in August with the different track temperatures and you learn that stuff year after year. We went through a lot of ups and downs and challenges with the car and we were nervous about qualifying for races at the start of the season, so it was a big learning curve. I was hoping for a few more top-10 finishes and a top-5 finish would have been awesome. The most disappointing part of the season for us was not getting the finishes we should have when we were running good, but that's racing."

The race for the 2018 SK Modified® NAPA Auto Parts was a tightly contested battle between Arute and Matt Vassar, who moved up from the Late Model division. Arute began the year in the hole as a blown engine in the season opening NAPA Spring Sizzler feature relegated him to a 20th place finish.

"We fell behind at the Sizzler when we blew the engine and ended up finishing in the back of the pack," said Arute. "We were running around 7th with about 5 laps to go when the engine blew and it took half the season for us to catch back up. Around mid-season we had 4 top-10's in 5 races which

was big for us. We figured something out in the middle of the year and we were able to beat Matt a few times. It always takes me some time to get going at the beginning of the year, I don't know why I'm so bad in the early stages. All year we were continuously learning about the car. The crew worked hard all year and we figured some things out towards the end of the year, we just never had any luck on our side."

For his rookie campaign, Arute was part of a 3-car stable with Todd Owen and Josh Wood and while he was able to benefit from some shared info between the trio, Arute says different driving styles limited just how much extra benefit he could learn from his teammates.

"It was a big help when we tried something and it showed on the track but we all have different driving styles so what worked for Todd and/or Josh might not always work for me," said Arute. "There were a few things that we all did the same but otherwise it's all based off the driver's feel. It wasn't like the SK Light with keeping the momentum up, you have to drive the SK all the time. When I was watching SK races last year I thought you don't have to go hard for the first half and save the car for second half of the race. In reality, you're always on top of the wheel, nerf bar to nerf bar. You can't afford to lay off at all or you'll get eaten alive by the guys on the track."

With a full season of experience under his belt, Arute is already looking forward to the 2019 season and being able to expand his SK Modified® notebook.

"I'm looking forward to next season," said Arute. "We have some good things to build off of and we need to improve some things. I think we've figured out how to adapt the car to my driving style

and the temperatures of the track, we just have to work on our weekly maintenance and upkeep of the car throughout the year. We have a big notebook to work off of and there are a lot more things for us to find but I think we'll be a lot better next season. I'd like to thank On Time Accounting, TD Fabrication, Big Haus USA, USA Hauling, New England Racing Fuel, Sunoco, Starrett, Maybury, Dunleavy's, Casagrande Builders, all the contingency sponsors. Kevin Harvick, Inc. Management for the 13th place finisher bonus, we won that three times, thanks for all their support. For the crew, I would like to give a big thanks to Alex Grab, he puts in a lot of time at the shop and the track and he's a huge asset for our team. Also have to thank Scott Macdonald for all his help this year and all the Lincoln Tech students, Natalie, Jacqueline, Kasey, and Will, they were all a great help, especially on pit road. For everyone back at the shop and Todd Owen for letting me use his shop and offering his experience and knowledge."

Arute will officially be crowned as the 2018 NAPA Auto Parts SK Modified® Rookie of the Year at the 49th Annual Stafford Motor Speedway Champions Awards Ceremony on Friday, November 16 at Maneeley's in South Windsor.

Tickets to the 49th Annual Stafford Motor Speedway Champions Awards Ceremony are \$50 per person and can be ordered by calling the Stafford Motor Speedway track office at (860) 684-2783, or by paying for tickets online at www.staffordspeedway.com.

For more information, contact the Stafford Motor Speedway track office at 860-684-2783 or visit us on the web at www.staffordspeedway.com.

Stafford Motor Speedway

STAFFORD SPRINGS, CT - Following a career that spanned from 2006 through 2017 in Stafford Speedway's Street Stock and Limited Late Model divisions, hometown driver Al Saunders moved to the Late Model division for the 2018 season. That step proved successful as he secured the NAPA Auto Parts Rookie of the Year award behind the wheel of his #40 American Sleeve Bearing Chevrolet. For winning the 2018 NAPA Auto Parts Late Model Rookie of the Year award, Saunders will take home a \$1,000 NAPA stores credit bonus that will be paid out during the 2019 season.

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"It's pretty cool," said Saunders. "You only get one rookie season in each division so it's an honor to win the Rookie of the Year title this season. It's tough to get the cars to the track every week so any bonus we can get is great and I have to thank NAPA for putting up the rookie bonus for us. I'd like to thank Randy, Jake, and Frank for their help as crew

members and American Sleeve Bearing, B.A. Muzio, Rob Davis, R.A.D. Auto Machine, Williams Race Gears, Streb Family Chiropractors, and Johnson Memorial Hospital for sponsoring me this year."

Saunders came into the 2018 season with a career total of 20 feature wins, with 12 Limited Late Model wins and 8 Street Stock wins. Saunders added to his career win total with his first Late Model win on June 29 and for the season he posted 6 top-5 and 18 top-10 finishes this season to finish fifth in the points standings.

"It was good season for us," said

Saunders. "We won a race this season and not everyone can say that because the Late Model division is pretty tough and it's hard to win a race. The win was the highlight of the year for us but I'm super competitive so it was a big change for us to go from being a contender for the win every week in the Limited Late Model division the last couple years. There were a lot of quality drivers who didn't win a race this year so it was a big accomplishment for us and it definitely helped give us some confidence."

While Saunders had 13 years of previous experience racing at Stafford to lean on during his rookie campaign in the Late Model division, he still had a slight learning curve to go through picking up on the differences between a Limited Late Model and Late Model car. Saunders was also behind the 8 ball when it came to having crew members on hand each week at the track.

"The Late Model drove very similar to the Limited Late Model car so even though there was a learning curve, it wasn't too hard to pick up," said Saunders. "The competition in the Late Model division is much deeper. In the Limited Late Model we knew we had a really good chance to be a top-5 car every week where in the Late Model we

were an 8th or 9th place car and that's just because everyone is so good. I think our biggest challenge this season was having everything prepared. There's more of a team aspect with the infield pitting in the Late Model division and we were a little shorthanded there since we only had about 5 guys each week to run 2 cars. We had a lot of extra work to get everything prepared."

While Saunders' feature win this season served as the high point of the season, Saunders says his best race of the season actually came in the NAPA Fall Final, where he was challenging for the race lead before an oil leak ended his day prematurely.

"I think the Fall Final was our best race of the year," said Saunders.

"We did win earlier in the year, but we started that race on the pole and we were able to build up a big lead on the field. For the Fall Final I felt like we definitely had a top-3 car and we were chasing down Michael Wray for the lead before we had a mechanical issue with an oil leak late in the race. We started that race third, got dropped back to fourth, and then fought back up to second and we were chasing down the leader so I think that was the best race of the season for us even though it wasn't a great finish to

end the year."

With his rookie season now complete, Saunders will focus on improving his on track consistency as he looks ahead to the 2019 season.

"I think a lot of times you see a rookie driver and they might win a race or have some top-5 finishes, but there isn't any consistency," said Saunders. "The second season is usually where you see the consistency start to take shape so I think this year was a great building year for us to get ready for next season."

Saunders will officially be crowned as the 2018 NAPA Auto Parts Late Model Rookie of the Year at the 49th Annual Stafford Motor Speedway Champions Awards Ceremony on Friday, November 16 at Maneeley's in South Windsor.

Tickets to the 49th Annual Stafford Motor Speedway Champions Awards Ceremony are \$50 per person and can be ordered by calling the Stafford Motor Speedway track office at (860) 684-2783, or by paying for tickets online at www.staffordspeedway.com.

For more information, contact the Stafford Motor Speedway track office at 860-684-2783 or visit us on the web at www.staffordspeedway.com.

INDY CIRCLE TRACK EXPO 2019
 Swap Meet - Trade Show - Auction

Date:
 January 26, 2019 at 8:00 am

Location:
 Indiana State Fairgrounds
 Indianapolis, Indiana
 Champions Pavilion

Buy, Sell & Trade
 Collectables, Tools, Spare Parts, Race Cars, Vintage Parts & Safety Equip.

Auction
 Buy/Sell Race Parts
 Nearby Lodging
 Parking just \$5

Sprint Cars - Modifieds - Midgets - Vintage - Street Stocks
 Karts - Mini-Sprints - Silver Crown
 Indy Motorsports Memorabilia

GENERAL ADMISSION: \$10
 Children Under 12: Free


