

THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

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THE MIDWEST'S SHORT TRACK AUTO RACING AUTHORITY

June 2017 Vol. 21, No. 2

Inside...



Kyle Petty Charity Ride



Going in Circles



Midwest Tour Action



Photo Gallery

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Publisher's Note *Racing According to Plan*



Dan Plan

It seems more often than not, I hear people complain about small crowds or low car counts. I'm going to use this column to point out some of the good crowds and large car counts I've seen so far this year.

2017 season off to a great start

I've been pleasantly surprised by car counts at several events this year, almost to the point of being ecstatic. At New Smyrna during Speedweeks, they had 26 East Coast Mods on hand. There have been years where they were lucky to get a dozen cars from the Mod Squad, but they stuck with it and things really paid off for them this year.

The Upper Midwest Sprint Car Traditional Sprints have been close to the 20-car mark on several occasions already this year. That's pretty impressive for a division that has only been in existence for a short period of time. If you believed everything you read on the Internet, one would have bet on having 2 separate series with 10 non-winged cars this year.

The Legend cars brought 24 cars to their part of the show at the Cabin Fever 50 at Dells Raceway Park. The drivers in the Legends group probably don't get enough recognition in the short track world, but they do tend to fill up the pits at the tracks and put on a good show.

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Bruce Nuttleman photo

The Midwest

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Connection

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Publishers note from page 3

The ARCA Midwest Tour's Joe Shear Classic at Madison International Speedway had 35 Super Late Models on hand. That's 10 more than they had in attendance for the event last year. LaCrosse Speedway also kicked off their 2017 season with a phenomenal 30-car Late Model field.

On the fan side of things, Volusia Speedway was busting at the seams most nights during Speedweeks, the Icebreaker at the Dells was a great crowd, Red Cedar Speedway has had great crowds on my two visits this year and the Joe Shear Classic at Madison had hundreds of people waiting in line before the gates opened Sunday morning of the show.

Other than a couple of rain outs, the way things are starting off this year, I think we're all in for a great season of short track racing in the upper-Midwest.



Dan Plan photo



2017 Season Schedule

Points Divisions: Late Models / Modifieds/Sportsman / Outlaws/Bandits /Legends

Date	Title <i>**Subject to change without notice**</i>	Adults 16+	Seniors 65+ Students 10-15	Children 9&Under
6/10	Gawronski Sign & Graphics Night Late Model, Sportsman, Outlaws, Bandits, Midwest Vintage Cars (Mods & Legends-OFF)	\$12	\$10	FREE
6/17	Illini Racing Series Night-IRS MIDGETS Late Models,IRS Midgets,Midwest Mods,Plus: American Super Cup Series (Legends, Outlaws, Bandits & Sportsman-OFF)	\$13	\$11	FREE
6/24	Wisconsin Challenge Series 75 Presented by Assembly Products Super Late Models,Sportsman, Outlaws,Legends (LM, Mods, Bandits-OFF)	\$15	\$12	FREE
7/1	Saturday-Independence Night of Thrills Show Starts at 6pm / Gates Open at 4pm	Thrill \$15	\$12	FREE
7/8	Walbeck Classic-UMA Super Late Models Super Late Models,Mods, Outlaws, Bandits (LM, Legends & Sportsman-OFF)	\$13	\$11	FREE
7/15	CWRA Super Late Models Twin 50's Super Late Models,Sportsman,Bandits,WI Sport Trucks (LM, Mods, Outlaws & Legends-OFF)	\$13	\$11	FREE
7/22	Kids Bike Night / Fan Appreciation Night Late Models,Sportsman,Outlaws, Bandits Plus: CSR Super Cups (Legends / Mods-OFF)	\$5	\$5	FREE
7/29	6th Annual Josh Blum Memorial Burnout Contest INEX Legends Regional Event Late Models,Midwest Mods,Legends, Bandits (Outlaws & Sportsman-OFF)	\$12	\$10	FREE

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***Dean & Jason
Talkin' Racin'***



Jason D. Searcy

This year, for the first time in their history, the Kyle Petty Charity ride ventured up here to the North Country. Kyle Petty was the leader of the pack of nearly 200 motorcyclists who made their way from Portland to Milwaukee. The group was welcomed into the tiny town of Darwin, MN on Thursday May 18th. The town easily doubled in size just from all the NASCAR fans awaiting their opportunity to see this spectacle in person.

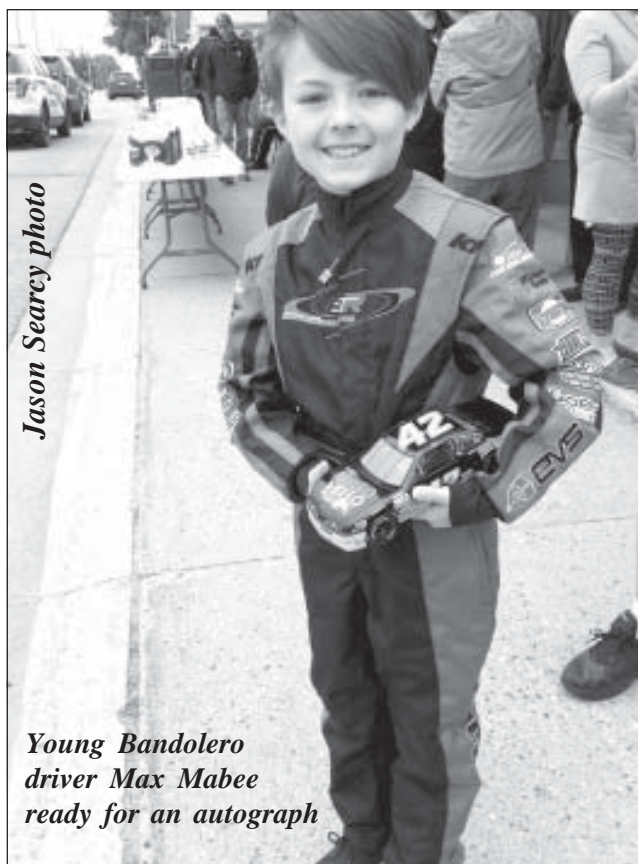
The mission of the ride is to sponsor fundraising activities and promote community awareness for the benefit of children with serious illness or injury. Much of the money raised goes to the Victory Junction Camp established shortly after Kyle's son Adam Petty was lost while practicing a Busch car at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in 2000, at the much too young age of 19.

NASCAR on NBC Commentator Rick Allen made the 2,400 mile ride this year, he looked very much different than how we usually see him on TV. Instead of the suit and tie, he was wearing full motorcycle gear, a scruffy beard and dark sunglasses.

Kyle Petty Charity Ride

"I do it for the kids," said Allen "the kids who might not have the opportunity to have fun because of an illness or an injury, they can go to the (Victory Junction) camp and live life like a normal kid, we want to make sure they have some smiles and happy thoughts."

The Kyle Petty Charity ride has donated over 17.5 million dollars helping send nearly 8,000 kids to the NASCAR themed Victory Junction camp located in Randleman, NC with no cost to their families. At this camp the kids can experience fun activities like bowling, archery, zip lines; fishing and swimming in a medically safe environment. They can just have fun like a normal kid, an experience many kids with serious illnesses don't have the opportunity to experience very often. One of the things they do at



Jason Searcy photo

Young Bandolero driver Max Mabee ready for an autograph



Jason Searcy photo

camp is that they encourage the kids eat ice cream for breakfast, just because they can.

Usually this ride takes the participants through either the Southern half of the United States, but this year they explored the Great White North. Of course, the weather has been a major hurdle, the group ran up against a snow storm while riding through Wyoming and their visit to Mount Rushmore in South Dakota was very memorable because of the fog, it was so thick the famous faces on the Mountain were not even visible. But that didn't get them down, Kyle and the whole crew just took photos with fog in the background.

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Going in Circles



Charlie Spry

Had a chance to witness a few racing events since the last column, including many at the Rockford Speedway and also at the Madison International Speedway in addition to a few others.

Rockford's Spring Classic saw a nice field of Big 8 cars present, with Michael Bilderback looking ever so strong once again. Might be a long season for others in Big 8 and Rockford weekly shows as this team looks as strong or stronger than they were last year.

Hated to see some good cars suffer damage early in the season. D.J. Smith's car probably one of the worst in a multi-car pile-up and resulting fire which did not want to relinquish. Smith brought his late model out a couple of times last year after racing in the Roadrunner division for a few years. This is quite a step up, but he looked good right away and even better early in the year as he is planning on going for the rookie title in weekly racing at Rockford. Another Rockford regular who had his car suffer from some heavy damage was John Beinlich in his new for him orange colored car. Early on in practice Hunter Drefahl had something break on his car and he backed it into the wall then spun around also damaging the front, then catching fire. Other than these two incidents, the racing was very much trouble and accident free.

Nice to see veteran Lyle Nowak return to victory lane here in the Mid-Am feature race. Lyle has to be one of the most humble drivers I have ever had the pleasure to meet, and he has accomplished so much behind the wheel of a race car. ANY race car.

After a weekend of rain, Rockford's regular season opener finally went off without a hitch. The aforementioned D.J. Smith was present in Kyle Shear's car, and brought it home to a third place finish in the late model feature at the opener. Another late model rookie to keep an eye on will be youngster Max Kahler. At fourteen years of age, Max is showing a high level of maturity in his racing efforts. Another new driver will be Jake Vanoskey. Jake formerly raced at the Columbus 151 Speedway, so I am very familiar with him. "We decided to try it here weekly, see how it goes," Said Jake.

Veteran Jerry Gille returns to the weekly Rockford racing this year after a year or so off to race a super late model. He seemed to have the feature win in the bag during the opener, until his car quit on him with four laps to go. Before the racing started, Jerry said, "I'm happy to be back, but you'd better check back at the end of the night to see how it went!" Jerry had to be happy with the racing, other than the final result of course, which could not be foreseen.

Back racing at Rockford in the Bandit division is Terry Ciano. I remember seeing Terry's Dad, also named Terry, racing his late model here in the late 1970's. The elder Ciano was usually a fast heat driver/car combo, and the younger Ciano has shown the same talent. He has raced a variety of four cylinder cars and divisions, as well as hobby stocks at various tracks, and even raced in Utah when he lived there a few years ago.

Jeff Wakeman is in his second year of racing late models here, after racing previously at Grundy. This season he said that he plans on concentrating solely on racing at Rockford. In addition to his late model, he also has a Mid-American car. Jeff races on a tight budget, one of few who still tows his car on an open trailer and pickup truck. "I don't expect to make money doing this. I will pay for tires and stuff out of saved money. If I make gas and pit pass money I'm good," said Jeff.

Zach Rodriguez has been one of the top drivers in the American Short Tracker division the past few years, winning the title in 2015 and nearly pulling it off again last year until a string of bad luck struck at the end of the season. "When I started racing, it was in this division. We got a car at the auction and ran it until mid-season, when it got totaled. This is now actually the third car I've had," said Zach. Other than racing go-karts, he has stayed with the AST division from the start, with obvious success.

Shannon Stoltz is new to the division this season, the former Roadrunner driver is racing the Wagner Motorsports entry, learning as he goes, getting faster and smoother. I enjoyed talking with sponsor Gary Prock, who raced Roadrunner cars back in the late 1970's, and knows a lot about the history of racing.

Kyle Voss came out last year in the AST division, but has been getting much faster and is now a feature win threat. Same with Franc Beldowski. Justin Pearson and Perry Anderson move up from the Bandit division.

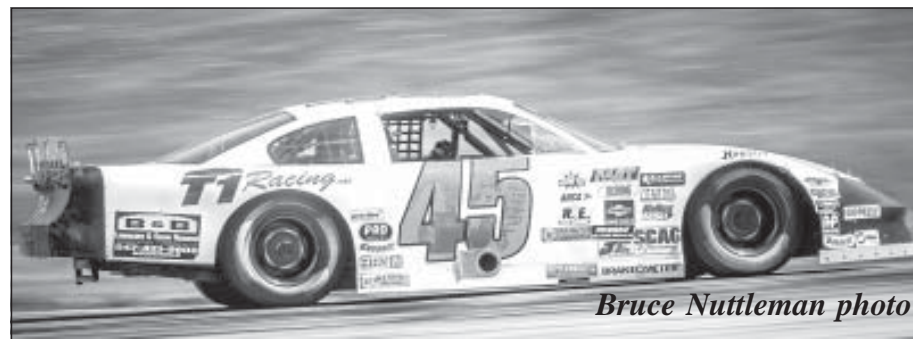
Johnny Robinson II is back racing in the sportsman division after a year away from Rockford. He won the feature the first night the division was scheduled this year. Garrick Fry came out late last year with a

sportsman car and is back again.

New driver Pat Ligue from Chicago is racing here in the Roadrunner division. Pat has raced at the Chicago area tracks and has been a regular here at the season-ending Bahama Bracket Nationals.

At Madison International Speedway, the annual Joe Shear Classic opened the season, featuring the ARCA Midwest Tour stars and cars. "Controlled" pit stops were utilized for this show for the first time, adding an interesting aspect to the race, and in reality, breaking it up and forcing some pit strategy, which worked well for some, and others not so much.

Drivers from various states were present, including Bubba Pollard from Georgia. It truly was an all-star field, but in the end, it was local driver Andrew Morrissey driving smart and getting the win. Rich Bickle was back once again (not retired as some thought). Rich saved his tires, drifting back at the start, but coming on strong at the end when it mattered.



Dan Fredrickson is always so strong at these events, and finished second, while Ty Majeski took third. Many top drivers had to race through the last chance race and even more had to take a provisional after all was said and done. Like I said, it was an unbelievable competition of who's who in short track racing. With a beautiful day and this level of competitors, the fans responded with a nearly packed house. That's always good to see.

The truck division continues to bring forth some very good competition, plenty of young talent getting into it, along with some real talented veterans. Local driver and regular MIS competitor Kevin Knuese got the win over James Swan and Kelly Bires, who had troubles early in the day with working the bugs out of a newly constructed vehicle, starting last on the field.

Veteran Bill Prietzel took the win in the Mid-American stock car portion of the event. Landry Potters' beautiful '57 Chevy bodied racer continues to wow the fans.

Next month I will take a look at some of the happenings at MIS as far as the regular season goes.

Going In Circles continued on page 13

Auto Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions



Dale P. Danielski

It was nice at last to take in some racing action as a nice April day, greeted drivers and fans alike at Golden Sands Speedway for the "Thaw" event.

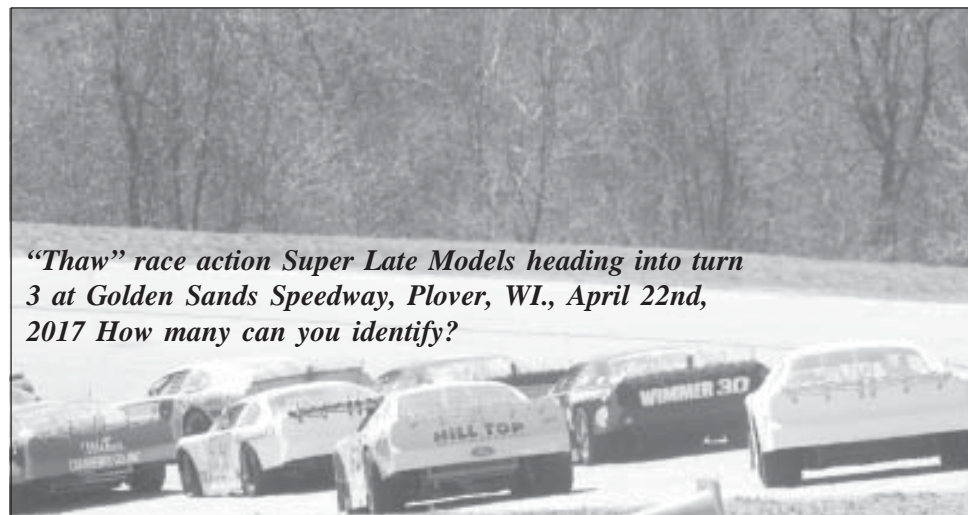
The race was also the first for new ownership team Mark and Cody Smiley. After a long run as owners/promoters the Basseuner family has sold the track and the new group intends to expand its offerings as time goes by.

The "Thaw" race offered a sizeable pay-off for all Divisions including a \$3,000 to win feature for Super Late Models. The larger purse brought out an

excellent field of cars, 32, and the racing proved to be very competitive. Although he wasn't perhaps most people's pre-race pick, driver Mike Litchfield proved them all wrong as he dominated the 100 lap main winning over a 20 car starting field. Following Litchfield at the finish was Casey Johnson, youngster Derek Kraus, Mark Eswein Jeremy Lepak and Dalton Zehr. A nice crowd on a Saturday afternoon (Yes, you are reading that correctly) were in attendance and hopefully they left craving more action as the track enters a new era of stock car racing.

I've often wondered why more tracks don't go with a Saturday afternoon time frame. In the past it was always that people had other things they were doing so you didn't want to interfere with that. My thought was always that the thing they are doing should be watching racing at your race track! I'm thinking over 1,000 were in attendance for the "Thaw" and hopefully that paid the bills and keeps peoples interest up. I know in my advanced age now I wouldn't have been brave enough to put up that kind of money for my first racing promotion but I give the Smiley's credit for "dangling the carrot" out there. Hopefully now and for years to come it pays off!

Another race we attended was the Lyle Nabbefeldt Memorial race at Dells Raceway Park, Wis. Dells, WI., May 13th. The race was round one of the CWRA "Stars to Legends Tour" and proved very



"Thaw" race action Super Late Models heading into turn 3 at Golden Sands Speedway, Plover, WI., April 22nd, 2017 How many can you identify?

entertaining as well. Of course most of the younger folks out there don't even know who Nabbefeldt is, so promoting these type of events can be difficult. Nabbefeldt is one of the drivers that the Tour name is derived from; A star back in the early days of Central Wisconsin racing and a legend to be as he raced and won everywhere for many years. Sadly, Lyle was killed at the Dells track in May of 1973 while attempting to qualify for the nights racing, which led to the Memorial events being held in his honor.

Skylar Holzhausen wouldn't be all that aware of racing back in Lyle's days, but his Dad Steve would, having started his racing career in the 1970s. Appreciating history is why the Holzhausens will be racing on the entire CWRA Tour in 2017 and the opening event gave them no reason not to as Skylar took both ends of the Twin 55 lap feature format on the night. Working his way from the back of the pack, Holzhausen found himself chasing early leader Jake Capek with the laps winding down. A slick pass in turn one put Holzhausen in the lead which he would not relinquish. Capek followed in 2nd at the finish with

Frank Nitzke, Eugene Gregorich, Jr., Jeff Weinfurter and Mike Sievers following.

The 2nd 55 found Holzhausen mid-pack for the start and he again steadily worked his way to the front. Meanwhile, Gregorich, Jr., who started in the front row, was in the process of building a huge lead. With the laps again winding down and Gregorich Jr., still safely in front, Holzhausen, who admitted afterward he really had to push it at the end, finally caught Gregorich, Jr., and made the victorious pass with 15 or so laps left. At the finish it was Holzhausen, followed by Gregorich, Jr., Capek, Nitzke, Rachel Kallas and Derrick Van Dreel rounding out the top 6 finishers. All in all an entertaining evening of racing and a great way to honor one of our racing heroes from the past.

Dale's pictures from the past



Matt Kenseth #8 raced and won at the Golden Sands Speedway in 1989. Frank Nitzke is racing the full CWRA Stars to Legends Tour this year but how many of you remember Frank's Dad Stu? Here he is in his #90 Ford. Bob Bergeron photo

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REMAINING 2017 SCHEDULE



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FRIDAY 16-JUN 7:30PM - NASCAR RACING PLUS BEER MILE
FRIDAY 23-JUN 8:00PM - MONTGOMERY WARD 200 ARCA SERIES
FRIDAY 30-JUN 7:30PM - SALUTE TO AMERICA NIGHT- FIREWORKS

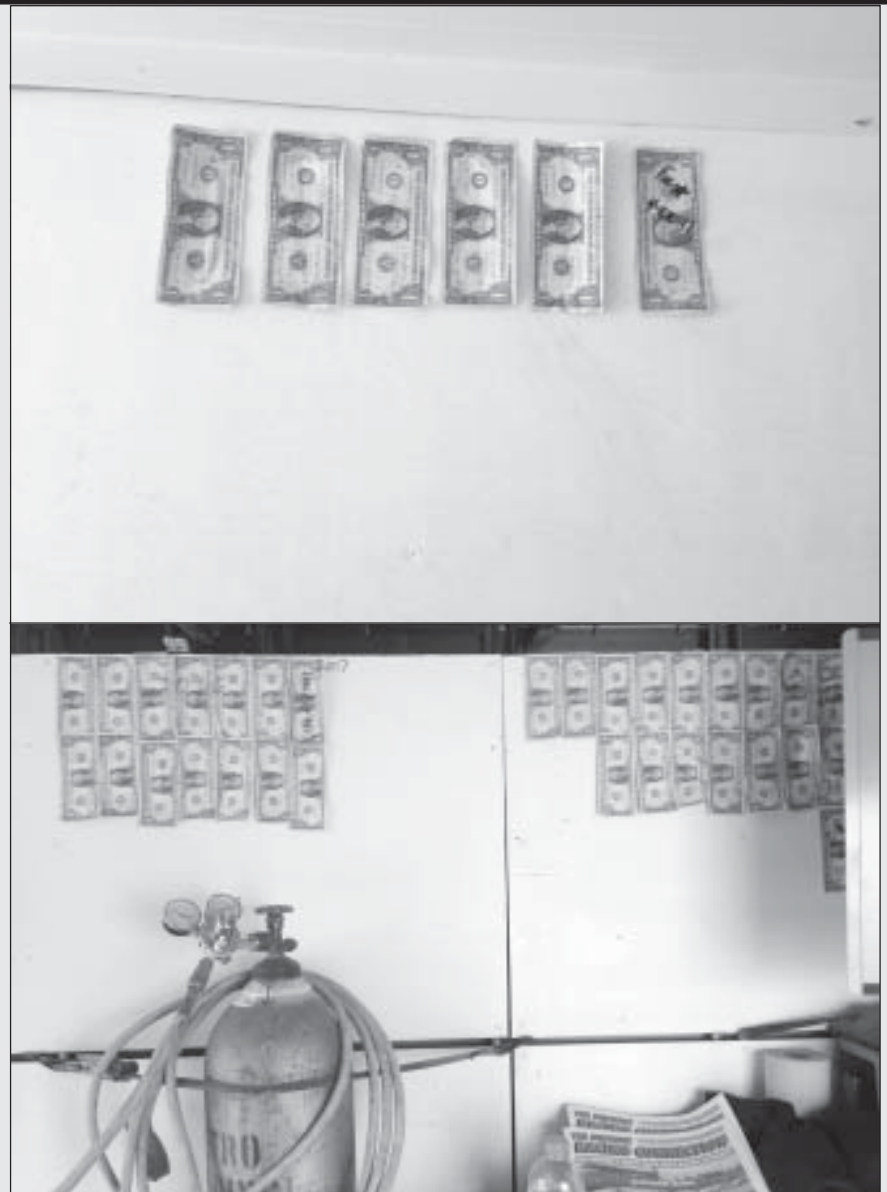


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Racing for money



UMSS Traditional Sprint Car drivers Scott Brandt, John Lewerer and Bryan Roach have a friendly wager each race night

A long-long time ago, I realized short track drivers don't actually make money running at weekly events. Sure, you can win some prize money, but you don't actually make money. In the overwhelming majority of cases, the prize money is nowhere near what the expenses are for the evening. It's the same in just about every class. Some classes race for more money, but they spend a lot more on their cars. Cars that race for less money have less money in their cars. At least that's what the common theory is.

Recently, I found three guys that found a way add some entertainment and make an extra buck each night they race. Earlier this season, I was in Bryan Roach's Traditional Sprint Car trailer at Cedar Lake Speedway. I noticed he had several dollar bills tacked up on the wall. Bryan explained he and fellow Traditional Sprint drivers Scott Brandt and Jon Lewerer have an ongoing wager for each feature race. Whoever finishes furthest towards the front of the pack in the feature gets one whole dollar from the other drivers. We're talking about cold, hard cash-money.



Doug Hornickel photos

Joe Shear Classic at MIS

Andrew Morrissey became the second driver to be a two-time winner of the Joe Shear Classic at Madison International Speedway. Morrissey held off late-race charges by Dan Fredrickson and Ty Majeski. The event this year was extended to 200 laps featuring controlled pit stops, adding several different strategies to the event.

SATURDAY NIGHT SHORT TRACKIN'



JUNE 3: (2) 20-LAP LM FEATURES
JUNE 10: KIDS' NIGHT
JUNE 24: AUGTOGRAPH NIGHT
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Jason Searcy photo



continued from page 5

These riders all seem to have a great attitude and were very impressed by the Minnesota landmark (assembled by one person) that has made Darwin, MN famous. "It's absolutely amazing," said Rick Allen "I got a selfie with the largest ball twine!"

NASCAR Legend and 18 time Cup series winner Harry Gant has ridden in all 23 Kyle Petty Charity Ride events and he loved the scenery in Minnesota. "You've got the most green grass I've seen around, I wish I had as much back home at my place, looks like your soil is rich and your fields are planted, it is something to see." Gant retired from racing in 1996 and now he spends his time raising 100 head of Black Angus Beef cattle at his 300 acre ranch back home in

Taylorsville, NC. "This is my vacation," said Gant "I really appreciate being here and the welcome you all give us, the fan support up here has been plum out of sight, more than we've had at most rides."

Manheim Auction Center is a sponsor of the ride and they hosted an event for the riders at their location in Maple Grove, MN presenting a \$70,000 check to Charity and having an early 80th birthday party for Richard Petty who was also in attendance.

Judging by their positive reaction, I don't think we will have to wait another 23 years for the Northland's next visit from the Kyle Petty Charity Ride.

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THE MIDWEST RACING CONNECTION

Photo Gallery



Nick Nolden and Grant Brown battle for the lead during the Cabin Fever 50
Jeff Blaser photo



Opening night at Rockford Speedway
Jimmy Ambruoso photo



Derek Lemke and Jon Lemke at Elko Speedway
Martin DeFries photo



A large crowd forms for the LaCrosse drivers meeting on opening night
Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttleman photo



Midwest Truck action at Madison
Bruce Nuttleman photo



Traditional Sprints go 4-wide at Cedar Lake Speedway
Vince Peterson photo

Going In Circles continued from page 6

The regular season opener just happened to be scheduled on a weekend where the area received nothing but solid rain for pretty much two days straight, making for a soggy couple of days on the weekend.

Finally, in the past month or so we have lost two more great people in southern Wisconsin racing. Art Blakely passed away when a car he was working on fell on him. Art had started his racing career back in the late 1970's, when he started off racing a super late model at the old Capital Super Speedway, which is now Madison International Speedway. Art told me that it was a mistake to start out spending so much money on a car for the top division, and said that he would never run the class again, as he suffered through parts breakage and other difficulties. He then would race limited late model cars for a few years with reasonable success, before quitting racing to concentrate on family. When the new four cylinder Bandit class emerged, Art came back into the sport, and this is where I met him, as I raced with him in the class. He told me that he later preferred the actual building of the cars than doing the driving, and he enjoyed fabricating things rather than spending the money to buy them.

Art was often seen racing his number 11 Quad-Four powered cars, usually hand lettered. We shared many interests and common ground, were the same basic age, and shared many of the same philosophies as far as racing goes. When the new entry-level "Six Shooter" class was started at MIS, Art jumped in and

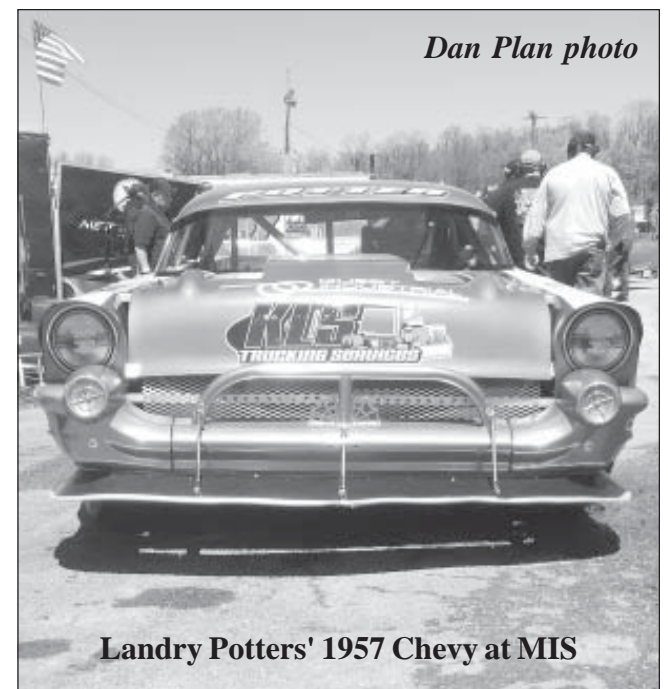
grafted a car, which he was proud to say was the first completed car for the division. I was and am honored to drive this car for Art last season and hopefully later this season once again. He was a very good friend and I will greatly miss his companionship and our chats. He was a very intelligent, yet down-to-earth person.

I thought it was very nice that MIS owner/promoter Gregg McKarns attended the visitation for Art, as well as various members of the Moore family from the former Columbus 151 Speedway. Art turned a lot of laps at both tracks, and it shows a lot of class for these folks to honor him and show compassion for the family.

Then, later in the month we lost long time track employee Dave Rottiger. Dave had many duties at area tracks, most recently at Columbus 151 and Dells Raceway Park, often as a pit steward. Dave was a pretty big guy, and he was actually kind of intimidating to many racers, especially the newer, younger drivers. You knew not to step on his toes, so to speak, as if you did something wrong you would hear about it. However, he usually would bust out a big grin right after that and calm your fears! He really loved the sport and was a genuine people-person. I will always remember him conducting the drivers' meetings at Columbus, usually sneaking in his phrase, "Let's keep them in one piece tonight and bring them back next week to try again." His wife, Joanne, also worked at Columbus as a scorer, and was a real sweet person. When I wrote the race reports for Columbus, I would go up into the tower to get the final result printouts after the races, and Joanne would be trying to get Dave to answer the radio, trying to find out if there

had been any disqualifications. She would get frustrated if Dave didn't answer right away, and they would have a little mild mannered bickering going on, the way that only two people who have been married for a long time and truly love each other can do. Joanne passed away a couple of years ago and I know it affected Dave a great deal. Now they can be together again helping run the races in Heaven!

It's going to be difficult to get by without seeing both Art and Dave around. They were both people that I feel had a very positive influence on myself, and so many others, as well as strong contributions to the sport we love.



Dan Plan photo

Landry Potters' 1957 Chevy at MIS

Battle of the Buses at Cedar Lake

The 2017 version of the Battle of the Buses at Cedar Lake Speedway once again drew a capacity crowd for the annual event. For the regular race fan, the event also included the UMSS Traditional Sprint Cars and USRA Limited Late Models for this year's event. Somerset High School was the big winner this year. Jeremy Kerzmen picked up his second win of the season in the Traditional Sprints in front of a packed grandstand. Lance Hofer picked up his second Limited Late Model main event of the year.



Vince Peterson photo



Vince Peterson photo

Racing Nuggets



Jacklyn Daniels-Nuttleman

I can remember as a kid when my grandfather made me write my multiplication tables out repeatedly while I was on summer vacation. I was mad. I hated math and that was the last thing that I wanted to be doing at that time. Yet, to this day, I can do multiplication pretty easily in my head. I guess that repetition paid off, despite my pouting.

Even though it's hard to accept, sometimes your parents (or grandparents) know what's best for you. That was the case with Ty Majeski. He wanted to play football when he was growing up, but his parents worried about his small stature being a liability in the hard contact sport. Instead, they got him started in go-karts at the age of nine.

Weekly go-kart racing eventually led to him scoring that first big win on his 10th birthday, which had to taste better than the most decadent of birthday cakes. The victory in that Briggs & Stratton-powered machine would be the first of many on a competitive journey that has him currently employed as a development driver for NASCAR's Roush-Fenway Racing.

Mr. Robot – The Majeski Machine

As I write this, Majeski's coming off of another win; this one on Sunday, May 21 at State Park Speedway in the ARCA Midwest Tour. That track is also where he garnered his first career win in a vehicle bigger than a go-kart. It was July of 2011 in an ASA Truck Series event—the Larry Detjens Memorial. The trophy still sits in the family home in Seymour, WI. Taped to it is a \$20 bill, which a man gave him that night, noting that it was printed the year that Detjens passed away—1981.

Majeski has a knack for scoring signature wins. His star really started to shine once he got into super late models; snagging victories, sometimes multiple times, in many of the prominent events in the racing world—The Governor's Cup, The Rattler, The World Series of Asphalt, and Oktoberfest to name a few. He still wants to add the Snowball Derby to his resume, and plans to run that again this December at Five Flags Speedway in Pensacola.

The fact of the matter is despite signing the development deal with Roush-Fenway Racing and moving to North Carolina; Majeski will still continue to race with his super late program this year as much as possible. Repetition—or seat time is the key to keeping skills sharp. The intention is to go after an unprecedented four titles in a row with the ARCA Midwest Tour, and grab wins at other various events, such as the aforementioned Snowball Derby as well as the Slinger Nationals. But how is the transition of getting his footing at Roush-Fenway going for him?

A typical day starts at 6:30am with an intense workout session crafted by Les Ebert. He's the physical trainer at Roush-Fenway; former trainer with the Jacksonville Jaguars—and fellow Midwesterner from Circle Pines, Minnesota. (His father used to crew chief for Dick Trickle.) All of my sources tell me Les delivers a grueling workout, the kind that would leave my husband meeting with the funeral director making my final arrangements. But this is the type of dedication

the organization implements to keep their teams in tip-top shape for competition.

Majeski has also been told to put on weight. It's been recommended that he do so, as when Chris Buescher was a Roush-Fenway development driver, he burned 4000 calories during a race at Bristol. That's a lot of calories and for a slim guy like Majeski when there isn't much body fat to him—eight percent is what he's been told. The folks at Roush-Fenway would like to see it between 11 and 12 percent. Apparently Majeski isn't cut out for weight gain. He struggles to eat enough to offset the exercise, but is still enjoying the muscle building properties of the regimen.

After the morning sweat session, Majeski moves on to drive the pit practice car for the Roush-Fenway development group and then from there, it's into the race shop around 9am to work. It's all very hands-on for him, which is fairly typical for development drivers. Buescher also went through the same routine when he was at this stage.

Eric Peterson, a Midwesterner himself hailing from Machesney Park in Illinois, is the Xfinity Team Manager at Roush-Fenway. He's also involved with driver development for the organization and has been one of the biggest cheerleaders for signing Majeski since he popped up on their radar. "He's the complete package of what we look for in a driver. He's very intelligent, race car smart, involved in the set-up of the car, and knows what makes race cars tick." But the one thing that everyone looks for is performance, and Peterson says Majeski's stats were "second to none in the late model world."

Peterson also added that it was a big plus that Majeski's an engineering student for understanding how the race cars work; an asset that has helped him

Racing Nuggets continued on page 15




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to transition some of his time working at Roush-Fenway in the shop to actually building shocks for the Cup and Xfinity teams, as well as becoming a vital part of the simulator program.

Roush-Fenway's Shock Department Manager, Dave McDonald says that when he was asked if he would take Majeski into his department, he figured it would be a role of cleaning up shocks that just came off of the track on a Cup or Xfinity car before they were cracked open to do maintenance. Majeski had never taken a shock apart before, so in McDonald's mind that would be a good place to start him. He could clean the stainless steel shims and do some basic maintenance for the department. But those mundane task really only lasted for a few days. "I'd look over at him and I could tell that it he was quickly getting bored with it, so we moved him onto more of the technical part of it," McDonald said.

One of the most exciting parts of the shock department is the development work they're doing, which is quite time-consuming. Putting shock packages together is a slow repetitive process. Tremendous time on the shock dyno, note taking, adjustment making, and more note making is required. That process is repeated again and again. It's a pretty arduous method, but exciting nonetheless because the end result is improved performance. Majeski is now involved with that process at Roush-Fenway, and he's soaking it up like a sponge.

McDonald says that Majeski doesn't really show a lot of excitement, "but you can see it in his eyes when there's something that clicks that could potentially help a driver feel, or help an attitude of a race car—or ultimately just plain equate to speed. You can see one of his eyebrows raise and you can tell—he's starting to get excited about this."

Majeski's been learning how to do external tuning on the shocks for the Cup and Xfinity cars as well—like

setting the bumpstops, but he isn't fully involved in that area just yet. For now, he's mostly been focusing on shock valving. You might be astounded by the amount of shocks that a team sends to a Cup or Xfinity race on any given weekend. McDonald says it's typically 70 to 80 shocks —and that's just the average number. Majeski has actually built shocks for Roush-Fenway Cup and Xfinity races. While the basics of how a shock works seems quite simple, there are a lot of complexities on how and when the fluid moves through the unit, based upon the particular way the innards of the shock are assembled.

The final step with the shocks once they're ready for the race cars involves logging the production of them and checking them again on race day to ensure that they match up to what was put together at the shop. That meticulous double-checking is integral for success. As part of that process, the file name for each shock contains the initials of the person who built it. McDonald says he was pulling shocks for a Cup car recently on race day to put them on the dyno for that double-check step. As he was examining the paperwork that accompanied the shocks, he saw the initials at the end, "TM." "Well, here's the rookie," he laughed. And as it turns out, everything was proven to be put together properly on the shocks that Majeski built. "He does a great job," added McDonald.

McDonald also works directly with Mike Tam who is the Director of Race Engineering at Roush-Fenway. Specifically, Tam focuses a great deal on the simulator program for the organization. And while Majeski is more than well-versed in iRacing, the simulator is certainly NOT a video game. It's a state-of-the-art piece of equipment located at the Ford Performance Technical Center. The unit runs on the same physics as a flight simulator, and an actual race car is used as the pod for the driver to operate it, providing a realistic environment. And while the simulator cannot create two to three G-forces—typical of what a driver experiences during a race—they are able to replicate the changes that happen in lateral force as a driver goes through a corner. Tam says you still have the

sensation of accelerating, but it's not just the visual experience, because the entire pod is actually moving.

That is achieved primarily through the platform itself on which the car/pod is situated. It can move and translate the rocking and rolling which happens on the track, whether it's a bump on the race surface, or driving up onto the banking. Even the harness belts tighten as one "drives" into the corner to help simulate G-forces. While G-forces can't exactly be replicated in the Ford simulator, iRacing can't replicate the "butt-feel" a driver gets in the actual race car or the Ford simulator. However, when a driver's perception and sensitivity is high, they become "one" with the car and are able to pick up on more intricate things in the cockpit.

Majeski says one of the benefits of doing iRacing repeatedly is that it's helped him to develop the ability to "see it before he can feel it," meaning that he already has high perception of the handling of his car just off of visual cues. "Coming into it, we knew that Ty was pretty good," Tam says. "I have since learned that he is really good at iRacing—like #1 in the world, which I don't find very difficult to believe, based upon my interactions with him."

Tam adds that Majeski is pretty impressive; almost robotic with the consistency he has when he gets in the simulator. "He doesn't really require a lot of downtime, or breaks. I can think of times that we've had him in there essentially for eight hours straight, which is quite a lot of time when you think about it. That's like one and a half Coca-Cola 600s!"

Some of the guys at Roush-Fenway have started calling Majeski "The Robot" because of that relentless and consistent performance. It's a name that Tam hopes they can make stick. But how can they translate what they're learning with this Majeski "robot" in the simulator to the track? "That's a good question," Tam says. "Most of what we take away—driving style—

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Upcoming Events

July 22
Cedar Lake Speedway

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Racing Nuggets from page 15

there isn't much. But we're able to come away from a set-up stand point and apply it across all of our cars. The nice thing with Ty is he's so versatile that I can do something that maybe we're afraid to try at the race track and it turns out that's for a good reason; because it doesn't work!"

Tam also says that Majeski does a really good job of driving his normal way to give them information and results, but then he'll try something different behind the wheel of the simulator, which gives them different and useful results. Generally speaking, the unit really helps to prepare for race weekends for both set-up as well as exploration in performance. "That certainly helps us a lot from a set-up standpoint, or if we just need to give some additional coaching to our drivers."

Tam says it's a really special time to be an engineer in NASCAR because the series has more resources, and when you have more engineering resources, your base of development can be accelerated quite highly. "We're on a pretty steep slope and it's exciting to watch and be a part of it."

For Majeski who is still studying to become an engineer, it begs the question—is he learning more through the hands-on experience at Roush-Fenway than he would in school? "He's gained a little bit of knowledge and experience that you certainly wouldn't gain elsewhere," Tam says. "I'm encouraged by that, but I'm more so encouraged by Ty's work ethic. He's really jumped on board and he feels like any other team member. At times it's very difficult to remember that his name is on top of the roof over the door."

Tam says the team likes to have some fun with Majeski when he's in the simulator. They allow him to get settled in by running a few laps before they start



Doug Hornickel photo

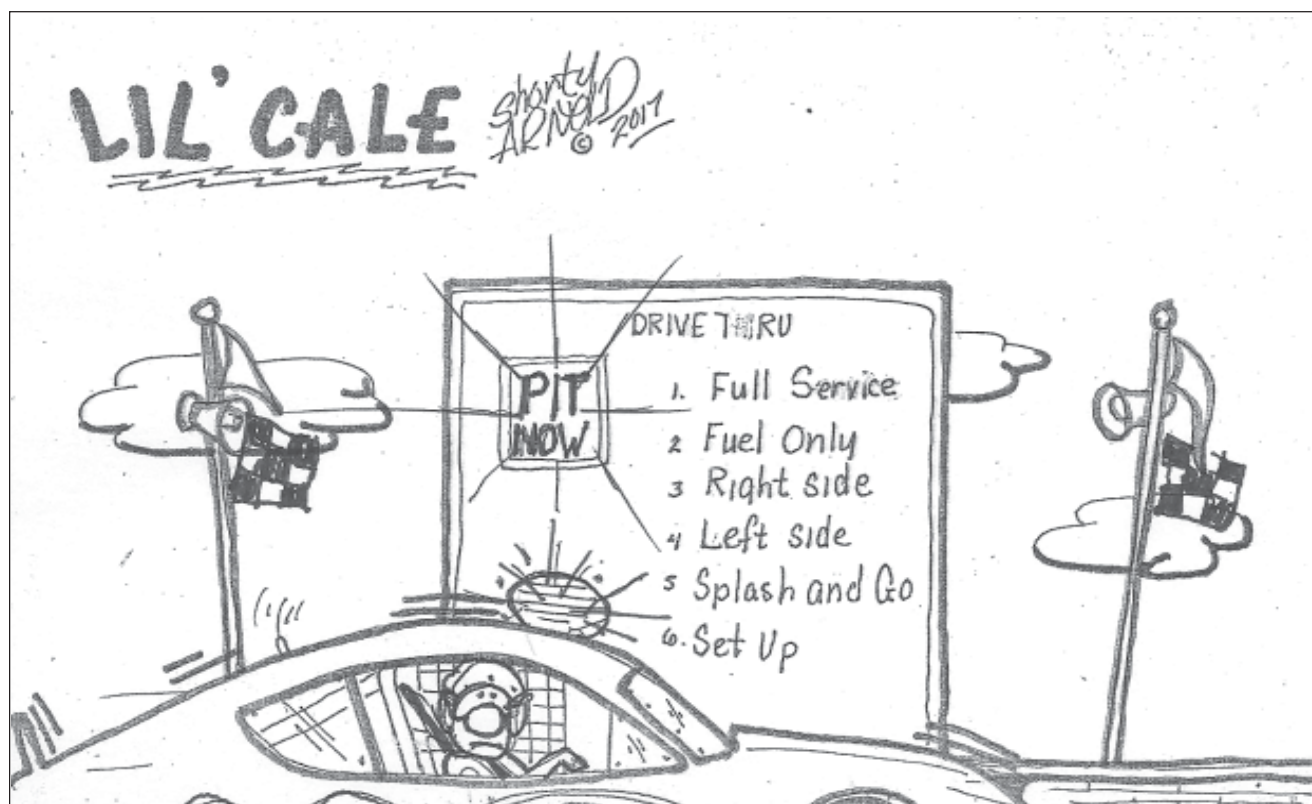
asking him for feedback. "We may make no changes. Then I just tell him how much faster I need him to go, and because he's so robotic, he's pretty incredible at just going faster. You just tell him he's running in the 40s and we need him to run in the 20s. It works every time," laughed Tam.

A typical week for Majeski will include some interaction with McDonald in the shock department and a great deal of simulator time on Wednesdays. That time is really appreciated by Tam and the team, as it's a challenge to get drivers into the simulator. Sponsor commitments and appearances can take up much of the free time a driver has. Trevor Bayne and his wife are expecting a baby soon, and then Majeski's race schedule with his super late model takes him away too. It's like herding cats to get quality time with a driver in the simulator.

Fortunately, it's a part of the job that Majeski relishes, and will likely continue to do so even if and/or when he gets the chance to go full time at one of the top levels of NASCAR with the organization. "I just enjoy it," he said and then mentioned he had just finished running an iRace prior to taking my call. "The Ford simulator is just really cool and an awesome opportunity that I want to take full advantage of while I have the chance. They work hard to try different set-ups and there just isn't enough time to do everything we want to do, so I want to maximize their time and mine with it."

Even small gains are viewed as forward progress in the big picture—and for good reason, as collectively they can combine to a big result. "The simulator will only get better as we continue to use it. I see it being an even bigger tool in the future, so it's definitely something that I'm going to try to continue to do as much as possible," he added.

Repetition—more seat time—whether behind the wheel of an actual race car, in front of a computer screen iRacing, or in the cockpit of the state-of-the-art Ford simulator—it all leads to better performance. And for Majeski, it's that repetition he loves. Imagine that; a robot with passion.



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A night with Johnny Boegeman

By Dan Plan

The Scott County Historical Society recently hosted a night featuring this history of racing within the county limits. The featured speaker of the night was the one and only Black Knight, Johnny Boegeman. Former Raceway Park announcer Kevin Busse was the interviewer for the evening.

Johnny had a lot of great stories to tell. It was a great opportunity to listen to someone that witnessed many of the events that happened in Twin City racing first hand. The driver boycotts, building a relationship with Super America and the fun times racing in the 1960's and 1970's. My favorite comment was when Johnny was talking about Dick Trickle changing from the Purple Knight to the White Knight. Dick stated he wanted be the White night as he was the purest of the group. I also finally found out why Johnny was on crutches when we saw him at Disneyland during Speedweeks in 1979.

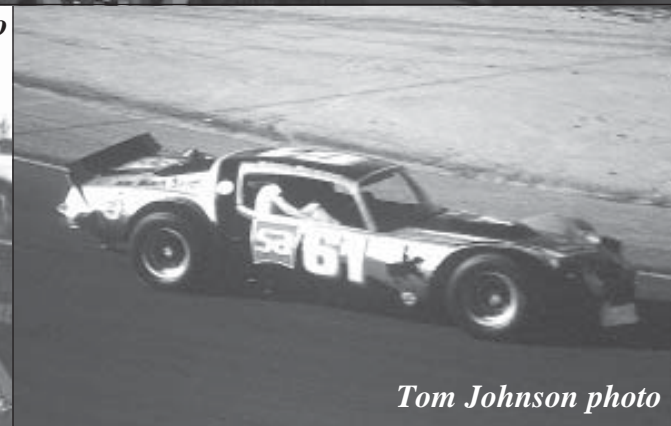
If you have an hour of extra time, the entire interview is uploaded on our YouTube Channel. Just search for the racing connection on YouTube and look for the Boegeman Scott County video.



Dan Plan photo



Dan Plan photo



Tom Johnson photo

Racing Facts, Observances and Opinions from page 7

Here and there...The next event for the CWRA "Stars to Legends Tour" was scheduled for May 27th at the Marshfield Motor Speedway of Marshfield, WI. By the time you read this the Jim Back Memorial race will hopefully have been held. We'll provide a report from there in the next issue of MRC... Speaking of Jim Back, there isn't enough paper or ink in pens to cover all that this guy was and represented both on the track and elsewhere during his racing career. Hopefully as we go, we can come up with a "Back" story or two to tell...La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway, West Salem, WI., has gotten just one of three scheduled events in so far but it proved to be a huge success, at least as far as NASCAR Late Model car count is concerned as 30 cars turned out for the first race. No stranger to victory lane here in recent years it was Ty Majeski taking the 25 lap Late Model win. Steve Carlson who is after another track championship placed 2nd and was followed by Tony Leis, Nick Panitzke, Corey Jankowski and Brad Powell. Some opening up a bit of rules for the LM division appears at least here early to be helping and hopefully car counts remain good for the rest of the season...Majeski continued his winning ways by taking the Cabin Fever 100 ARCA Midwest Tour event at State Park Speedway of Wausau, WI., here May 21st. The event was actually moved from May 20th to the 21st due to horrible weather

conditions on the scheduled race date...In the quote of the column section, actually two quotes, it's Skylar Holzhausen racing in the Nabbefeldt Memorial at Dells Raceway Park." I'm not very confident racing on these tires (Towel City Racing tire) here tonight, I just don't know what to expect." Holzhausen after the racing was completed. "I love these tires, I raced hard on them and they stayed consistent. I was worried about passing with them but you can pass on the inside and outside without abusing them."

And looking back in time on Saturday night, May 29th, 1965 it was Marv Marzofka winning the feature race at Dells Motor Speedway, Wis. Dells, WI. Following Marzofka at the finish was Jim Back, Lyle Nabbefeldt, Dick Trickle, Dave Marcis and Marlin Walbeck. The semi-feature went to Dave Larson with the consolation race winner Del Kemnetz. Heat race wins went to Kemnetz, Chuck Smith, Wayne Kittleson and John McFaul. Fast timer among the 46 cars on hand was Trickle in his 1958 Ford at 14:02 seconds. And on May 5th, 1968 at Golden Sands Speedway,

Plover, WI., it was Dick Trickle winning the Central Wisconsin Racing Association 25 lap Late Model feature. Following Trickle was Jim Back and Marlin Walbeck. The semi-feature winner was Dick Schultz with the consolation race win going to Dick Ames. Heat race winners were Ray Hoffman, Ray Knutson, Dave Marcis and Marv Marzofka. Fast time went to Walbeck at 14:02 seconds.

Skylar Holzhausen in victory lane after taking both 55 lap feature wins at Dells Raceway Park



Jeff Blaser photo

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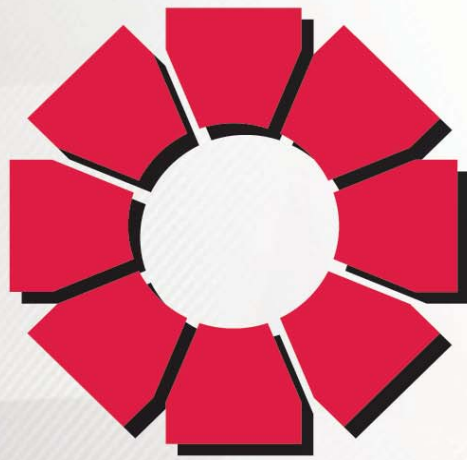


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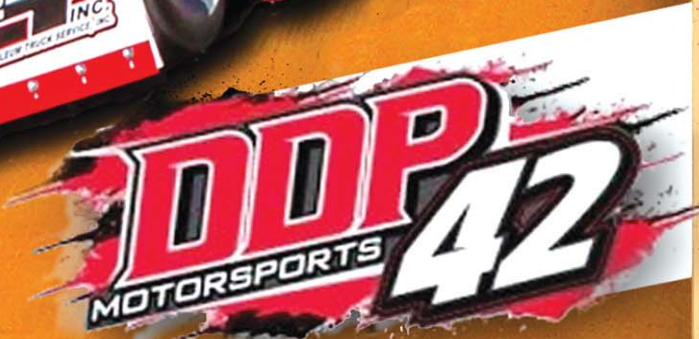
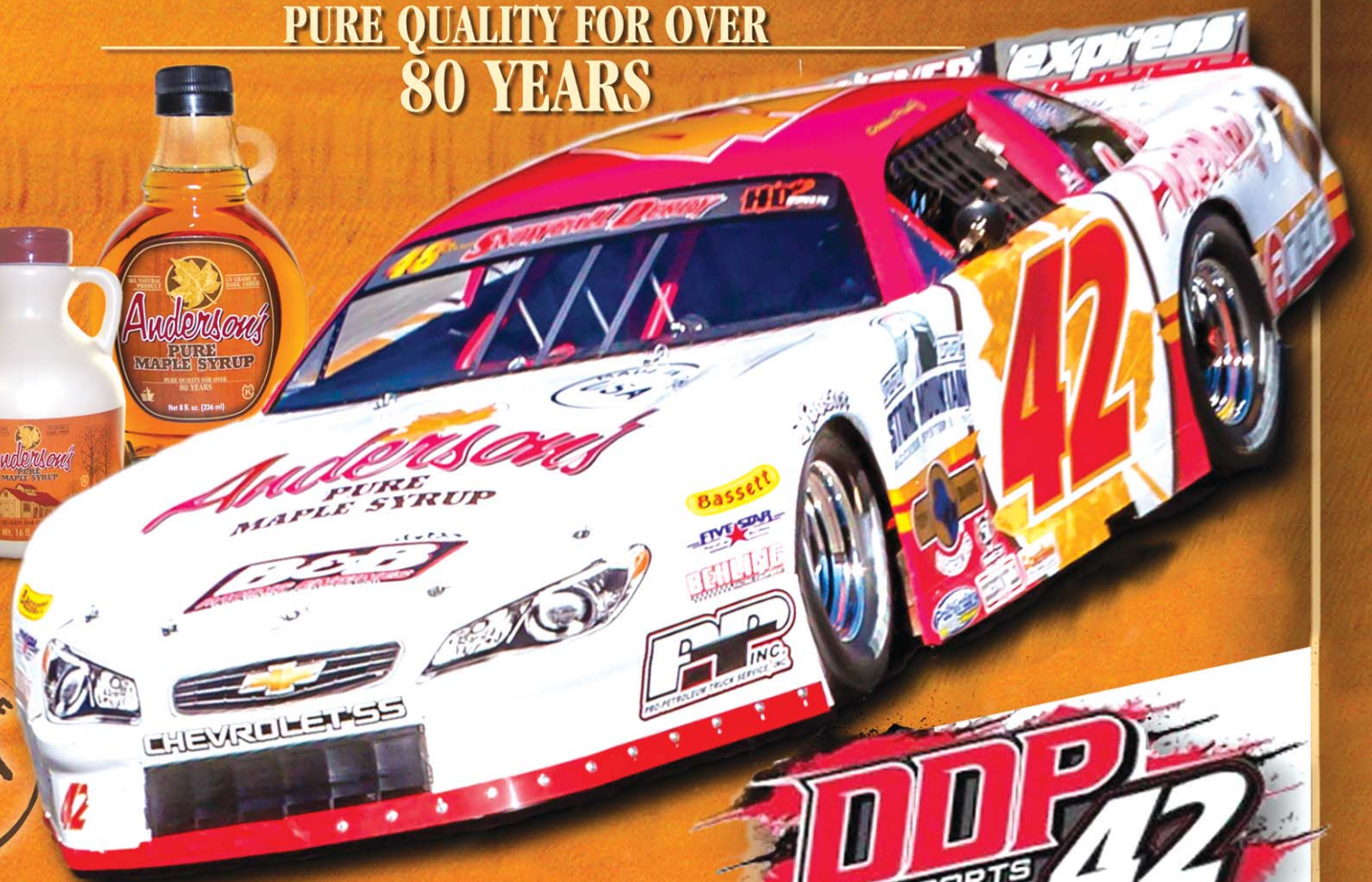
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