

# **AUTOMOBILE RACING ADVENTURES**

By Dale P. Danielski

At last, after an interminable winter, stock car racing action commenced here at the La Crosse Fairgrounds Speedway of West Salem, WI. Although the weather was very threatening early on, a great opening day crowd showed up for the night's racing with an equally impressive field of over 80 cars on hand in three divisions to do battle.

Early spring is always a fun time of year to catch some racing as everyone is fired up for the new season with cars all looking brand spanking new with flashy paint jobs and lettering. With the doom and gloom media continuously making us aware the economy is in bad shape, the race cars nonetheless, as per usual, adorned a wide array of company sponsor supporters. A few quarter panels were bare but hopefully those will have graphics on them in the next several weeks.

NASCAR Late Models are again the top attraction at the 5/8 mile paved speedway and 20 were here tonight to duke it out. With several lead changes taking place in the 25 lap main event there was plenty of action to be seen. When all was settled however it was Mike Carlson snaring his first ever Late Model division win. Carlson if you hadn't already guessed is the son of 2007 NASCAR National Champion Steve Carlson. Mike grabbed the lead from J. Herbst with just 5 laps left in the event and held off dear old Dad, the 2008 track champion for the hard fought win. Also interesting in his winning was his car sported a very eerily similar paint scheme and number that his Father used racing in the Midwest for years. I have a notion also, that this won't be the last win for young Carlson. Following Steve Carlson in the final race order was Herbst, Shawn Pfaff, Kevin Nuttleman, Paul Proksch, Todd Korish, and Brent Kirchner, Tony Bagstad, Emily Sue Steck.

The Sportsman division found Jeremy Miller knocking off the 15 lap feature win, while Jason "The Shark" Stark took top honors in the Thunderstox main.

All in all it was a great way to get the racing season off and running in these parts and hopefully Mother Nature has at last loosened her stranglehold on the region and allowed for some nice, spring like weather!

Here and there....New this season at the Fairgrounds is the adding of 10lbs weight after each feature win in the NASCAR Late Model Division. The weight goes on after each win and must remain there for the balance of the season. In track Manager Chuck Deery's opinion, "This change in rules will enable the 10<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> place cars to have a chance at winning a feature here." It will be interesting to see how the new rule works here as this type of strategy has been implemented at other tracks in the past. So if Steve Carlson wins 8 main events in 2008 like he did last year, he will be carrying 60 extra pounds of weight....Andy Burgess who has raced at the track for many years appears will be on the sidelines this season. His presence may be felt however as cars he drove will be piloted by Shawn Pfaff and Paul Proksch....J Herbst has gone with a different engine builder racing at the Fairgrounds this year. PHM will provide the power for the Herbst Monte Carlo.....It would appear the track is going to be a bit tougher on rules infractions in 2008. Items checked more frequently will be carburetors and shock

absorbers which have really gotten outrageously expensive in recent years. No warnings either as infractions will draw disqualifications.....



**#50 Mike Carlson racing to his first ever NASCAR Late Model feature win.**

Good to see the ASA Midwest Tour get off to a great start at the Elko, MN., Speedway April 19<sup>th</sup>. Jake Ryan bested a 47 car field to capture the 150 lap main event there. Next up for that Series will be a 100 lap affair at the Madison International Speedway of Oregon, WI., May 4<sup>th</sup> .....Also getting rolling is the Wisconsin Challenge Series as they begin their 9 scheduled event season at the Dells Raceway Park, Wisconsin Dells, WI., on April 26<sup>th</sup>. Look for a great field of cars for that one....Until next time try to save fuel since Government can't seem to "buy right", while heading to your next race event.

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