

Ft Wayne's Austin Coe takes two at Mt Lawn

By Josh Bolden

Hot temperatures and hot tempers would be the name of the game on Sunday at Mt. Lawn Speedway as the track would play host to the CRA Vore's Welding & Steel Late Model Sportsman Series for the 11th time with a 75 lap feature event. Joining the Late Model Sportsman would be the Claborn Motors Modifieds, Fields Auto Parts Street Stocks, Owens Electric Stock Compacts, Sunnyside Auto Crown Vics and the Midwest Champ Kart Series.

For the Sportsman, Ronnie Rose of Anderson set the fast time in qualifying with a time of 16.906. But whatever advantage Rose would have would be finite, as the top 8 qualifiers would all qualify within half a second of one another. Following an inversion draw, in which the fast qualifier picks where he will start in the feature race, Rose would start on the outside of row 3 for the 75 lap feature event alongside longtime Mt. Lawn veteran Kevin Claborn of Cambridge City while RJ Norton Jr of Indianapolis and 3-time Raintree 100 winner Jeff Marcum of Morristown would start on row one. The race would remain relatively incident free through the first 1/3rd when William "Billy" Hutson of Ft. Wayne would take the lead after a battle with Norton and JP Crabtree of Muncie over several laps as the three drivers danced through each groove looking for the advantage. After Hutson took the point, he would begin pulling away, holding a nearly two-second lead over the collection of drivers who would assume 2nd and 3rd places behind him. On lap 42, Claborn would see his day end with mechanical troubles that had begun their affliction a few laps earlier. Despite his strong start and his 2nd place qualifying position, Claborn would finish in last place. As the on-track action continued, Austin Coe, a competitor in Mt. Lawn's Modified class would begin to gain ground on the contenders, passing Rose on lap 50 and catching Hutson on lap 64 for first place. Four laps later, Hutson would spin while giving chase to Coe, setting up a 7 lap fight for the finish. On lap 70, Marcum would re-enter the fight for the victory by passing Coe only to lose the lead the following lap. On lap 72 Rose and Cassten Everidge of Stroh, Indiana were involved in a turn 4 incident. Everidge would continue on in the event, Rose however would not as he would require a tow to the pits. Over the race's final three laps Coe, Marcum, Crabtree, and a charging Hutson would battle but Coe would be able to hold off the charge to win, his 2nd consecutive CRA Sportsman victory at Mt. Lawn dating back to last year. Hutson would finish second by just .080 seconds with Marcum finishing third.

In the Claborn Motors Modifieds, 21 drivers, teams, and machines would clock in times for the 30 lap feature, but week one winner Jeff Lane of Knightstown would not be among the participants. This would allow drivers like Ryan Amonett of New Castle, Andy Cowan of Modoc, JJ Schafer of Columbia City, and others the chance to shine. Schafer and Amonett would start on the front row and from the start Amonett would set the pace, leading the first 25 laps. The one thing that would not play into his favor however was cautions. 9 cautions would fly during the 30 lapper, with the most significant caution coming on lap 13, when Adam Keasling of Cambridge City, Joe Jennings of Richmond, Don Skaggs of Modoc, Adam Lee of New Castle, and Colin Grissom of Anderson were all involved in a turn 1 pileup. Skaggs, Jennings, and Grissom would see their nights end early. On lap 25, Austin Coe of Ft. Wayne would make contact with Amonett, bringing out the 8th caution and ending Amonett's night just 5 laps from a

flag to flag victory. Coe would hit his marks to record his second victory of the night. Robbie Wyman of Alexandria would finish second with Phil Jenkins of Greenfield finishing 3rd.

The Owens Electric Stock Compacts battles would continue on to this week, as drivers from Indianapolis and Ohio would once again attempt to stake their claim to racing success in Henry County. To help alleviate some of the problems of week one, the field was split into two separate features with cars qualifying under 20 seconds in the "A" feature and cars 20 seconds and over in the "B" feature. In the A feature Jim Meeks of Indianapolis and Christopher Hensley of Springfield, Ohio would lead the field to the green flag in the event with Meeks pulling ahead early in the 20 lap feature. On lap 7 Hensley would take the lead and would hold it before being passed by "DVV3" Donald Van Valkenburg III of Indianapolis who started at the tail of the field. Van Valkenburg III, who was driving Jess Holliday's #34 from a week prior, would lead the rest of the feature race to take the victory. Hensley, who had battled a loose car all race, would finish second.

In the "B" Feature Harold Bruce of Indianapolis would pick up the victory in the car traditionally driven by Donald Van Valkenburg III, coming from tenth place. Brad Miller of New Castle would finish second with Kaleb May of Middletown finishing third. Bruce would also win one of three heat races held, with Pushin' Limits Race Team members Brandon Kindler of Knightstown and Travis Lee of Kennard winning the other two heats. Lee would fill in for the usual driver of the #27, Trey Baer.

The biggest fireworks of the night would come following the Fields Auto Parts Street Stocks feature won by Kevin Claborn. Claborn, who finished second to JP Crabtree last week, would not be denied after taking the lead on the restart on lap two. On lap 10 the #51 car of Crabtree would make contact on the front stretch with Keegan Anderson of Knightstown sending him into the front stretch wall. Anderson's car would then rebound into oncoming traffic and was struck by the #18 of Kevin Rabenstein of Muncie. Anderson and Rabenstein's nights would prove to be over and Anderson would be forced to the hospital for a concussion and other possible injuries. Following the checkered flag and while in technical inspection for his third place finish, members of Crabtree's and Rabenstein's teams would aggressively explain each team's point of view while Mt. Lawn officials and other teams would attempt to break it up. After all was said and done, Claborn would be followed by Calvin Parham of Spiceland and Crabtree.

In other racing action for the evening, John Lister of Louisville, Kentucky would claim the victory in the Sunnyside Motors Crown Vic division over Kaylee Atkinson of New Castle and Jordan West of Muncie while in the Midwest Asphalt Champ Kart Series, Scott Carson of Richmond would pull a clean sweep of qualifications, a heat race, and the feature. Karl Schildbach of Rocky Ripple, Indiana would win the second heat race and finish second, while Mike Mason of New Haven would finish third. The feature for the Karts would be red flagged for some time after Harleigh Sullivan of Wanamaker would sustain leg injuries after striking the turn four wall. Her condition was not known as of press time.

The next race at Mt. Lawn Speedway will be Sunday June 13th and will consist of the CRA Street Stocks, the Claborn Motors Modifieds, the Marcum Welding and Steel Pro Compacts, the Owens Electric Stock Compacts, the Sunnyside Motors Crown Vics, and the return of the

American Vintage Sprint Car Association to Mt. Lawn Speedway. More information can be found www.mtlawn.com or on the Mt. Lawn Speedway 2020 Facebook page.