

August 14, 2013

Good friends, good weather, fast cars, 310' of 5 degree banked asphalt and Southern Hospitality can only mean one thing; Quarter Scale Oval Racing at Lagoon Park R/C Raceway in Montgomery, Alabama.



This year the QSAC NCS Final Showdown presented by WCM Racecars, makes its stop in Sweet Home Alabama at Lagoon Park R/C Raceway, home of the Capitol City Car Club. The weather forecast was for sunny skies, highs in the mid to upper 80's with the occasional surprise from Mother Nature, and she did not disappoint.

The racers started arriving as early as Tuesday and Wednesday with the bulk of the entrants coming in on Thursday to see if they could tame the Southern Belle, some were having more luck than others but then if this were easy it would be called a video game. This is far from a video game. This is Full-Sized action, technique and skill all in a Quarter Scale Race Car.

This year at the Final Showdown the classes that would be contested wound up being Sprint Car, Limited Sportsman, Sportsman and Super Late Model. Not only would the individual race have its winners but the QSAC National Championship standings in each class had yet to be decided.

In practice the locals had the advantage at first but the racers in Quarterscale are a quick study and were soon all of the racers were up to speed. Fast times in the Sportsman class were 5.9-6.0 second laps with the Limited Sportsman cars not too far behind. The Sprint cars with their large wings, wide right rear tires and light weight were burning up the track in the 5.8 second range with a few dipping into the 5.7 second range. The Super Late Model class running the bigger restrictor plates like the Sprint cars and taking full advantage of their high-downforce bodies were ripping off 5.7 second lap times almost cracking the 5.6 second mark. Only time would tell if anyone would make it that fast or not, the other question is going that fast can they take care of their tires to make the entire race?

The first QSAC Summit meeting was held on Thursday night at Varsity BBQ close to the track. Several things were brought up for discussion among which were race attendance, number of races, promotion of QSAC and QuarterScale racing in general, car availability, old times and one or two other things. By no means were all topics that needed to be brought up discussed, nor were any great ground breaking ideas. But what it did start was further opening the channels of communication between the Racers/Members of QSAC and the Leadership Team. This was the true meaning for holding the meeting. This is something that should happen at every QSAC NCS event.

After everyone had gotten all the practice available, tech was opened up on Friday morning and the racers and mechanics were ushering their cars through the four station Tech area manned by the members of the CCRC. All manner of things were checked to be sure that all the cars were competing on a level playing ground and the true test would be in the setup and driving of their cars, which is the way it should be, right?

With all of the cars making it through Pre-Tech a final practice session was allowed for that last minute tuning and then it was time for the drivers meeting. The rules of the race, starting procedure and introduction of the race officials were taken care of at this time along with the Parade of Cars where the Concourse winners were picked. After all of that was taken care of it was time to get to the real reason we all make the trips.

IT WAS TIME TO RACE!

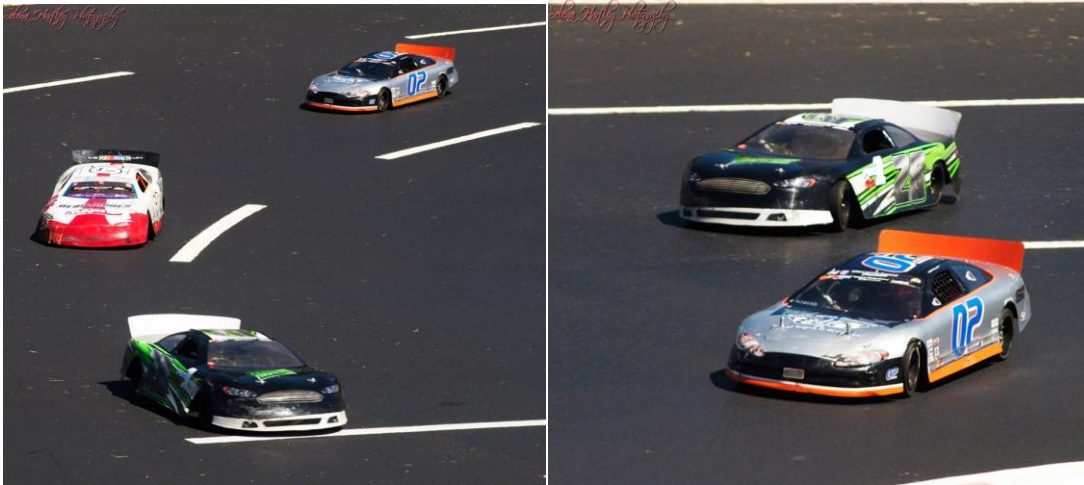
First up single car qualifying, this is used to determine the starting order of the racers in the qualifiers. Each car comes onto the track, has one warm-up lap and then 4 times laps, the fastest lap is what “seeds” a racer into his/her qualifier. After all the cars in the four classes had completed their timed laps it shook out like this; In Sprint Car it was Todd Holloway in his Predator turning a fast time of 6.033 seconds. In the Limited Sportsman class Gregg Grahn would show the way with a lap time of 6.929 seconds. Up next, the Sportsman Class with Hueytown, Alabama’s own Jerry Evans setting the top time of 6.400. On to the last group, the Super Late Model class. Once again it would be Jerry Evans posting the fast time of the class. Jerry turned in a fast time of 6.198 seconds.

After all the heats were setup it was time to put the racers to the test of LPR and see who could show the fast way around the track.

Sprint Cars were up first and would compete in 25 Lap “sprint heats”. Group one hit the track and showed it was ready to let some low times fall with close racing, well as close as open wheel cars can get. Larry Hopson won the first round followed by Mike Sadler, JR Parsley and Fred Murray. In this heat the fast lap was set by JR with a 5.907. The second group only had three cars in it and allowed the drivers to spread out and get used to the track. All three cars had fast time under the 6 second mark and they finished they way they started. Todd Holloway claimed the win, with Randy Baker in second and Kevin Ligon in third. Todd Holloway turned in the fast time of 5.790 seconds, remember I said the track would get fast.



Up next is the Limited Sportsman class. These guys are mostly just getting started in the sport so to keep things on an even playing field they are grouped together. Wayne Rogers had to sit out the first round due to having to work early Friday so this race ended up being a two car heat. Derrik Belcher dropped out after only four laps with some mechanical issues so at the 26 lap mark of the 40 lap heat race control called the heat and awarded the win to Keith Barnes. Group two had four cars in it for the 40 lap race. All four cars finished on the lead lap with only 1.4 seconds separating 1st to 4th. When the checker flag dropped it was Gregg Grahn, Mark Hogue, David Popham and James Adamson. Only .173 seconds was the difference in fast lap times in the group, this class was shaping up to be a great race by the time Saturday and the Mains roll around.



Next on the grid is the Sportsman class. This group was putting in fast lap time all during practice and some were even giving the Sprints and Super Late Model cars a run for their money. Scott Harper sat this one out to call the action and that left Frank Boling, Tim Smith, Raymond Johnson and Bubba Coker to fight it out. At the 25 lap mark Bubba brought his 22 machine in for repairs and would not return, that left 3 cars to run out the remainder of the heat. All 3 finished on the lead lap, it was Frank, Tim and Raymond with Raymond turning in the fast time of 6.093 leaving Frank and Tim to turn in 6.114 and a 6.111 respectively.

Group two was ready to take a turn and show what they had been working on so after some warm up laps the green flag was dropped and 5 cars took off in a hurry. Jerry Evans and Randy Brown would lap the field and be the only 2 cars on the lead lap at the end. The finishing order was Jerry Evans, Randy Brown, Mike Clark, Allen Johnson and Tony Evans. Fast lap of this heat was turned in by Tony Evans in his rent-a-ride from TCR with a 5.911. Jerry clocked a 5.990, Randy a 5.994, Mike a 6.181 and Allen a 6.213.



The Wedge shaped Super Late Models were sitting in the pits ready to go when good ol' Mother Nature had other plans. After about a 2 hour rain delay and some track drying the track was opened for a brief test session and on to the SLM heat we went.

The four racers in this class were Jerry Evans, Todd Holloway, Randy Brown & Brent Gottfried. All of these cars had posted quick times in practice but with a freshly washed track, who knows. The horn sounded and they were off with Jerry out front followed by the rest of the field. Jerry would hang on until lap 17 when Todd would take the lead and never look back. When the checker waved it was Todd, Randy, Jerry and Brent. All four would finish on the lead lap with identical fast laps turned in by Jerry and Brent of 5.913.



Two more qualifying heats were run and then the yearly running of the **BRP Dash**. This is where the five previous winners of the NCS races are lined up along with the top 3 from the Final Showdown for a 15 lap, shootout for a \$100 Gift Certificate from Todd Bishop at BRP.

The Sprint car shootout was dominated by Todd Holloway. The Limited Shootout came down to the end with a green-white-checker restart allowing Wayne Rogers to beat out James Adamson for the win. In the Sportsman class it also came down to the wire with Jerry Evans getting loose coming out of turn two with two to go allowing Allen Johnson to get past him on the back stretch and hold out for the win. Last up for the night was Super Late Model. Todd Holloway once again led it at the end to gain his second shootout title of the night.

Bright and early Saturday morning the track was prepped and waiting on the racers to start one round of controlled practice before the track was closed at 10:00am for a very special presentation.

The Capitol City Race Club, Lagoon Park R/C Raceway, Quarter Scale racing and the world in general lost one of those people one can only hope to meet and have them be a part of their lives. In August of this year we lost a very dear friend, Mr. Marlin Wade. Although Marlin is no doubt in a much better place now and looking down on us trying to get us in line, we miss him greatly and can only hope to see him again one day.

So the CCRC felt it only fitting to remember our dear friend in a way we thought he would appreciate. We have dedicated the timing booth to be known from this day forward as the **Marlin Wade Scoring and Timing Booth**. With friends, racers, members and Marlin's Family in attendance we took the time out to remember our friend and hopefully to remind each of us that it is not only about racing, it is about the friendships we make.



After the dedication it was time for one more round of heats, a little last minute preparation by the racers and then time for the main events.

As has been the order of the weekend the Sprint Cars would take to the track first. Qualified in first place Todd Holloway followed by JR Parsley, Randy Baker, Larry Hopson, Mike Sadler, Kevin Ligon and Fred Murry. Fred would be sitting out the main due to damage sustained in a crash and could not get the car repaired in time. Fred would be indispensable as a permanent pit steward making sure all went according to the rules, Thanks Fred!

This race was to be a 100 lap main event with a pit stop at the 50 lap mark for fuel only. If any other work is done to the car then that racer will have to go to the end of the line to restart. Not usually a big deal over a long race, seeing as these cars are flying and it is a short race, hence "Sprint Car" so not hitting the setup is bad in more ways than one.

With the drop of the green it was Todd Holloway out front and turning in some quick times, lap 4 was already a 6.0, with a caution early on lap 6 that would slow things down. Randy spun out and had to go to the rear. With the restart on lap 10 Todd took off once again with JR hot on his heels. By lap 12 Todd was running sub 6 second laps and so was JR. On lap 34 Mike Sadler would make a move into second dropping JR back to third with Kevin in 4th, Randy in 5th and Larry in 6th. That is the way they would come in for the 50 lap fuel stop. Once they were refueled off they went again. On lap 58 Kevin Ligon made a pass on JR to move up into 3rd and setting his sights on the leaders. Mike Sadler would challenge late having saved his tires for a couple of late race runs at the lead but it was not to be.

Todd Holloway led it Green to Checker with Mike only .573 seconds behind at the end. Todd turned in the fastest lap of the race as well with a blistering 5.709 and Mike Sadler with a 5.711. the rest of the order is Kevin Ligon in 3rd, JR Parsley 4th, Larry Hopson 5th, Randy Baker 6th and Fred Murry DNS.

Next up is the Limited Sportsman class. These guys put on a great show not only for me to call but for the fans in the stands to watch. 7 cars lined up to take the green in the following order; Gregg Grahn, Keith Barnes, Mark Hogue, Derek Belcher, David Popham, James Adamson and Wayne Rogers.

The green was dropped and following in the Sprint Car's Main, lap 6 was the first caution. After a little rough going things got settled down around the 26 lap mark and the racing was close and heated. So far the lead had only been shared between two racers. Gregg Grahn and Keith Barnes. When it was time for the fuel stop on lap 50 the running order was Keith, Gregg, Mark, David, Derek, James and Wayne. James would not make it out of the pits due to technical difficulties so that left 6 cars to do battle to the end. Keith would lead the pack around Lagoon park with Derek

retiring early on lap 57. A brief caution on lap 60 would bunch up the field once and for all. Gregg recaptured the lead on lap 77 with a car that was a full 2 tenths quicker than the field. This put Keith in 2nd, Mark 3rd, David 5th and Wayne 6th. Wayne would drop out with only 16 laps remaining and it would be Gregg Grahn taking the win with Keith Barnes in second, Mark Hogue in 3rd, David Popham in 4th and Wayne Rogers finishing 5th.

After post race tech and engine tear downs, Gregg Grahn's engine was found to be out of tolerance on the intake port timing measurement and therefore his finish was disallowed, moving all the racers up one position.

The largest field of the event was due up next, the Sportsman class. There would be a full field of 10 cars in this race and that always makes for interesting racing. Scott Harper who had sat out qualifying in order to run the event had registered in the sportsman class and with urging from Mike Sadler, Tony Evans and Brent decided to run the main. Seeing as he had not turned in a qualifying time, he was to start at the tail end on the field.

The starting order would be Jerry Evans, Randy Brown, Frank Boling, Allen Johnson, Mike Clark, Bubba Coker, Tony Evans, Tim Smith, Raymond Johnson and Scott Harper.

There must have been something in the air, the first caution for this race came out on, you guessed it, lap 6. After the re-start it was still Jerry Evans showing the way dipping down into the 6.1 lap times early in the race and catching traffic fast. Jerry would get into trouble on the 25th lap bringing out the caution and having to go to the rear this allowed Allen Johnson to take over the top spot. By lap 50 and the first fuel stop the running order had been shaken up quite a bit. It was Allen, Frank, Scott, Randy, Mike, Raymond, Tony, Jerry, Tim and Bubba. The cars were refueled and ready to go at it again. The first car out would be Jerry Evans retiring on lap 86 with tire trouble, Bubba Coker would call it quits on lap 96 and the field cam down pit road on lap 100 for more fuel. Allen still held the lead with Tony in 2nd and Scott in 3rd followed by Frank, Randy, Mike, Tim and Raymond. on lap 109 there would be a huge pile up on the back stretch involving several cars including the 5th place car of Scott Harper which would cause him to pull it in for good on lap 118. Leaving 7 cars to fight for the win. The real battle was for second place, leaving Allen all alone at the front running in clean air. Second place would be swapped back and forth between Randy, Frank and Tony.

The third and final fuel stop, came on lap 150, allowing the tires and drivers to cool off a bit and gather one last breath before making a run to the checkered flag. Allen led them off and never looked back until lap 185 when Randy Brown got a run on him coming through 3 and 4, Allen pushing wide and Randy taking the lead it looked as though it was in the bag for Randy, but this is racing and we go to the end. A late race caution would come out setting up a 3 lap dash to the end. Randy could not hold his Gram Cracker down low enough and that allowed Allen to get under him and take it all the way to the checkered flag dropping Randy back to second and Tony Evans rounding out the top three. The rest of the order was Frank Boling, Mike Clark, Tim Smith, Raymond Johnson, Scott Harper, Bubba Coker and Jerry Evans.

The last race of the weekend was the Super Late Model Cars. This would be a 150 Lap Main event with fuel stops every 50 laps. The starting order for this race was Todd Holloway, Jerry Evans, Brent Gottfried and Randy Brown. I know you are not going to believe this but there was no caution on lap 6. As a matter of fact there was not a single caution for the entire first leg of the race. Brent would get by Jerry Early on lap 4 for second and Randy would move Jerry back to 4th on lap 15. Brent would overheat that right rear a little on lap 30 getting a little sideways but keeping it going this would allow Randy and Jerry to go by him dropping him back to 4th. Randy took over the top spot with a good run on Todd at the 41 lap mark and that is the way they would come into the pits; Randy, Todd, Jerry and Brent. Off with fuel Brent would take the lead on lap 57 and there he would stay until lap 91 when he let Todd sneak back up and take the top spot once again. Fuel on lap 100 for the 50 lap dash to the end. On lap 107 it was Todd, Brent, Jerry and Randy. Randy moved Jerry to 4th on lap 115. With a caution on lap 131, it was setting things up to be quite interesting for the finish. At the restart it was Todd, Randy, Brent and Jerry. On lap 138 Jerry would go from 3rd to 1st bringing Randy with him and leaving Brent in 3rd with Todd in 4th. Lap 144 brings out the yellow for the last time and when the green is dropped Jerry is in the lead followed by Todd, Randy and Brent. Jerry just did not have enough to hold off the late race charge of Todd Holloway. At the drop of the checkered flag it was Todd Holloway with the win, Jerry Evans in 2nd, Randy Brown in 3rd and Brent Gottfried in 4th.

To say this was a great weekend is an understatement. Fast cars, Great Friends and good times is what make all of this worth while.

It was my pleasure to call the races and to be a part of the great racing that is the QSAC NCS Series. On behalf of the entire crew here at Lagoon Park R/C Raceway, we thank you for coming to our track and hope to see you all again, very soon.