

LaPolt Returns to Take Bethel Opener

Saturday May 6th turned out to be a beautiful day for racing at the Catskill Mountain Nascar Home Track. After two attempts at the Season Opener scheduled for April 22nd, Mother Nature finally co-operated to kick off the 2023 Season.

Following a season of visiting various tracks, and racing the Open Racing Challenge Series, Skip LaPolt, has returned to his home track, looking to uproot reigning champion Ed Dachenhausen for the 2023 title.

Leading the field to green for the Nascar Asphalt Modified feature, was the ageless one, John Cote, with LaPolt to his outside, via the redraw. Cote gained the advantage at the drop of the green, with LaPolt holding second, and returning Mike Dutka in third, and Dachenhausen fourth. Dachenhausen was to third on lap 6, with the remainder of the field unchanged. Cote looked to be a lock for adding to his over 150 win record at the speedway, but a tangle with a lap car on unlucky lap 13 sent him tail of the lead lap cars. The restart found LaPolt inheriting the top spot, and a hungry Dachenhausen now in second, and Dutka third. The field would remain unchanged for the closing laps of the twenty lap event. LaPolt, Dachenhausen, Dutka, Mac Crawson, and Cote would round out the top five.

Joe Knoth was back to his winning ways, fresh off his 2022 championship, taking the Dirt Sportsman feature over Ed Dachenhausen, and Ed Butler in their twenty lap feature.

The Nascar Street Stock feature provided for great action during the heats with two and three wide racing, leaving the fans craving the same for the twenty lap feature. Walt Henry would draw pole for the redraw, with the INEX Bandolero division 2022 champion Leland Oefelein making his first official street stock start, drawing second. The front two would remain unchanged until contact from another car on lap seventeen would take the Rookie out of contention for the win. Another Rookie moving up from the 4cyl Novice division, Tucker Katz would grab the runner up position on the restart, lose it briefly, and regain, while they jockeyed for position behind him. All the while, Walt Henry would drive off for the win. Henry, Katz, Scott Tyler, Emerson Cargain Jr, and a rebounding Oefelein would be the top 5 at the checkers.

Kyle Welsch would cross the line first in a green-checked restart of the Nascar Pro Stock feature over Josh Wilbur, Brandon Decker, Bill Decker, and Tom Katz, for the top 5.

INEX Legends racing action was led wire to wire by Nick DiVone over Chris Piasecki, Eugene Drew, Bryan Gardella, and Joe Przybylinski Jr.

Jordan Smith took the checkers in the INEX Bandolero division, leading Olivia Tyler, and Easton Houghtaling to the line.

INEX Beginner Bandolero action would find James Bauernfeind and Madison White trade the lead back and forth throughout the ten lap event, with Bauernfeind gaining the advantage with two to go, driving off to his third career win.

Rounding out the racing program, Jeffrey Tubbs wins Modified 4cyls, Jeff Degroat gets the monkey off his back, winning the 4cyl Advance, Shane Turner the 4cyl Novice, Jerry Kingeter the Junkyard Dog 71 Open Comp Enduro, and Richard Smith would win the heldover Charlie's Classic 42 Mini Van Enduro.

Racing returns on May 13th, with the Modified 4cyls highlighting the card for the Spring of '69 classic event.