

Murns is all aces in Bethel's 'Junkyard Dog 71' memorial race for Don Palmateer!

April 17th, 2021:

White Lake, NY: Bethel Speedway kicked off their 2021 race season in a full afternoon of practice with over 50 race cars of various types turning laps on the Sullivan County oval located just minutes from the site of the original 'Woodstock' music festival held in 1969. The highlight of the day was the first race of the 13 race enduro series with the 'Junkyard Dog 71' a memorial to the late Don Palmateer who passed away one year ago. Palmateer was a longtime racer in the area who often competed at Bethel Speedway in his 'Junkyard Dog' #17 machines.

Newcomer Sean Lynch and Long Island enduro racer Blake Drinkwater started the race from the fan's countdown as the flagman waved the green flag from turn 1, but both drivers ran into mechanical issues early on dropping them from the event as winning contenders.

David Donovan and Richard Smith quickly marched to the front from their mid pack starting positions. As the two drivers mitigated lapped traffic and battled for the lead, it allowed top runners Joel Murns and Mike Travis to close in and become challengers as well. Smith's car began to develop mechanical woes dropping him from contention. Travis began to contend for the lead coming from the last starting position as Donovan had his hands full with heavy lapped traffic. Lap 13 proved to be unlucky for Donovan as he had a cut right rear tire forcing him to head pitside relinquishing his battle for the lead moving a strong running Bruce Illenberg into the top 3.

Travis began to pull away from Murns as he powerfully navigated lapped traffic. Meanwhile, Allan Holland, Scott Young, and Drew Atchison battled for top 5 positions. Lap 25 found the red was quickly thrown to get a driver out of harm's way in the infield. Under red conditions, the leader Travis suffered cooling system problems knocking him out of the event. Murns inherited the lead when racing went back to green.

Murns smartly led the remaining laps despite several close calls with some other cars with handling problems, lap 46 saw Young dropping out of the event with parts from his car littering the track. Adam Butreau moved into the top five in his first ever start as Illenberg, Holland, and Atchison continued to run solid in the top 5. The final stages of the race found fan favorite Jessie Palmateer; son of Don make an amazing comeback from earlier problems in the race as he rallied up to sixth place in the running order.

Lap 71 found the dual checkers waving for the street stock veteran Murns who claimed his first Bethel enduro win at the speedway over Illenberg, Holland, Atchison, and Butreau for the popular win as he celebrated with much excitement in victory lane to the fan's delight.

4/17/21 Results:

'Junkyard Dog 71' Enduro Feature: 1. Joel Murns Jr. Westbrookville, NY 2. Bruce Illenberg 3. Allan Holland 4. Drew Atchison 5. Adam Buteau 6. Jessie Palmateer 7. Andy Terwilliger 8. Dennis Hummel 9. Scott Young 10. Mike Travis 11. Sean Lynch 12. Dan Houghtaling 13. Richard Smith 14. David Donovan 15. JW Gannon 16. Blake Drinkwater DNS. Tasha Travis

