

2020 USAC DMA MIDGET SEASON

LAST TO FIRST: HULL DIGS IN TO WIN DMA OPENER

By: John DaDalt

Bradford, Vermont (June 27, 2020).....If the season opening race for the USAC Dirt Midget Association was any indication, defending champion Will Hull showed his competitors they have some work to do.

Starting last in the field of 13, Hull drove by everyone at Bear Ridge Speedway to win the first race of the year.

Justin Phillips led the feature from the first lap and had built up a comfortable lead as the field dived for position behind him. A caution on lap 10 for a Jeff Champagne spin proved to be the turning point. The tail-starting Hull had raced his way to second when the caution flew. One lap after the green flag flew to restart the feature, Hull worked his way around Phillips to take the lead which he held for the remainder of the race.

After the race, Hull was a happy winner.

"The car worked great anywhere on the track," Hull said.

That was evident by Hull's passing of teammate Seth Carlson on the low side of the track, a mid-track split of Floyd Billington and Manny Dias and taking the car up high if needed. The night wasn't perfect for Hull, however, as the steering broke in the Seals-It #3 as he went out for his heat race, relegating him to last place in the heat.

Runner-up Phillips was disappointed to come up short after running so strong early in the feature but all in all was happy with the night.

"We reworked the wiring and the computer on the car over the winter and weren't certain what to expect," Phillips said. "The bottom was still muddy, and I never really tried the high groove. I felt good other than Will passing me. (I) figured I'd stay low unless someone else went by and they never did. Bringing it home 2nd was a good start to the year."

Third place finisher Seth Carlson was satisfied but saw room for improvement.

"The car wasn't bad for its first real outing," Carlson said. "(It's) still lacking some forward drive but we have ideas to get it better. Will drove a smart race and congrats to him."

Series newcomer Floyd Billington did a fine job, finishing 4th. Manny Dias rounded out the top five. Seymour Performance Products heat race winners were Tim West in his first race for the Seals-It Racing team and Phillips.

The next race for the USAC-DMA midgets is Saturday July 11th at Bear Ridge Speedway in Bradford, VT.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION RACE RESULTS: June 27, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. 5-Tim West, 2. 7-Brandon Piastka, 3. 92-P.J. Bleau, 4. 44-Floyd Billington, 5. 33-Melvin Pierson, 6. 91-Wayne Koehler, 7. 50-Owen Carbee.

SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. 16-Justin Phillips, 2. 4-Seth Carlson, 3. 42-Manny Dias, 4. 18c-Mike Chaffee, 5. 77-Jeff Champagne, 6. 17-Justin Sheridan.

FEATURE: (25 laps) 1. Will Hull, 2. Justin Phillips, 3. Seth Carlson, 4. Floyd Billington, 5. Manny Dias, 6. Jeff Champagne, 7. Brandon Piastka, 8. Justin Sheridan, 9. Wayne Kohler, 10. Melvin Pierson, 11. Tim West, 12. P.J. Bleau, 13. Owen Carbee.

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-11 Justin Phillips 12-25 Will Hull.

NEW USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION POINTS: 1-Justin Phillips-75, 2-Seth Carlson-71, 3-Will Hull-70, 4-Floyd Billington-66, 5-Manny Dias-64, 6-Jeff Champagne-59, 7-Brandon Piastka-59, 8-Justin Sheridan-52, 9-Wayne Koehler-49, 10-Tim West-49.

NEXT USAC DMA MIDGET RACE: July 11 – Bradford, Vermont – Bear Ridge Speedway

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CARLSON GETS FIRST DMA WIN OF 2020 AT BEAR RIDGE

By: John DaDalt

Bradford, Vermont (July 18, 2020).....With a mix of patient and aggressive driving, Seth Carlson worked his way from his 10th place starting spot to take the lead from Justin Sheridan on lap 17 and went on to a nearly two second victory in the USAC-DMA midget race Saturday night at Bear Ridge Speedway. It was Carlson's first win of the year.

Owen Carbee led the first three laps of the feature from the pole as the field exchanged positions behind him. Justin Sheridan emerged from the pack to take the lead on lap three. Racing was tight behind him as the top five would edge by one another with none holding an advantage over the other for long.

Sixth starting Pierson charged into the third spot on lap four and soon moved up to challenge Sheridan never letting him get too far ahead over the next ten laps. Carlson had used the high groove to break into the top five by lap four, from there he picked off Dias and Carbee and slowly gained ground on the leaders.

Carlson was starting to put pressure on Pierson and Sheridan when the caution flew on lap 15. On the restart, Carlson outmuscled Pierson for second and chased after Sheridan. After a brief battle, Carlson took the lead in turn four on lap 17 with a clear track ahead.

Pierson went after Sheridan for second until he got over the inside berm in turn two flipping his car into the infield. The race resumed after the red flag with Carlson unchallenged for the win. Sheridan finished second, Manny Dias third, Brandon Piastka fourth and Jeff Horn fifth.

A third-place finish on opening night was a good beginning to the race season but Carlson knew changes were needed.

"We made some radical changes to the car this week, some things we have never tried before," Carlson said.

He didn't divulge any details, but suffice to say, the changes worked. Despite daytime temperatures in the 90's and a blazing sun, the track surface was in good condition for the feature. In fact, lap times were about two seconds faster than they were at the last race. This suited Carlson just fine.

"The track was a bit faster which definitely plays more to my driving style," Carlson said. "Justin Sheridan was pretty quick; we had a good battle for a few laps. Every week it seems like the competition gets stronger."

Car owner Skip Matczak added, "I was very pleased with Seth's performance he did a good job."

Sheridan, meanwhile, was happy to finish second.

"Much better than the last time we were here," Sheridan said, referring to his heat race roll at Bear Ridge three weeks ago. "I knew I had to get to the lead quick because some of the fast guys were behind me and weren't going to wait. My car had good balance and I was able to get a good start, get aggressive and use the top and bottom to get through the leaders. After I got the lead, I kept running my line. Right before the caution I could hear someone behind me and figured it was Seth. At the restart he (Carlson) used his experience to run the top and started to run away from me. I was pushing a bit hard to get back to him and made a few mistakes. After the red, I just tried to run my own race again and was happy to

come home second and get my first podium. Very thankful to Ray Miller for giving me an opportunity to race for him and for Bear Ridge and the DMA for giving us a track to race at.”

Opening night’s top-two finishers experienced mechanical issues in their own mounts relegating them to back up rides. The Matczak #3 of Will Hull had a cracked water reservoir while Justin Phillips had engine problems in his Ray Miller owned #16. Hull stepped into the Matczak #2 and Phillips bumped teammate Joe Krawiec from the Miller #1. Both failed to finish the feature.

Seymour Performance Products heat race winners were Jeff Horn and Manny Dias. The next USAC-DMA race will be at Bear Ridge Speedway on Saturday, July 25.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION RACE RESULTS: July 18, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. A1-Jeff Horn, 2. 7-Brandon Piastka, 3. 50-Owen Carbee, 4. 91-Wayne Koehler, 5. 5-Tim West, 6. 55-Mike Netishen.

SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. 42-Manny Dias, 2. 17-Justin Sheridan, 3. 33-Melvin Pierson, 4. 4-Seth Carlson.

FEATURE: (25 laps) 1. Seth Carlson, 2. Justin Sheridan, 3. Manny Dias, 4. Brandon Piastka, 5. Jeff Horn, 6. Wayne Koehler, 7. Tim West, 8. Melvin Pierson, 9. Will Hull, 10. Owen Carbee, 11. 1-Justin Phillips, 12. Mike Netishen, 13. Adam Whitney.

**Melvin Pierson flipped on lap 21 of the feature.

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-3 Owen Carbee, Laps 2-16 Justin Sheridan, Laps 17-25 Seth Carlson.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION POINTS: 1-Seth Carlson-146, 2-Manny Dias-136, 3-Brandon Piastka-127, 4-Justin Sheridan-126, 5-Will Hull-116, 6-Justin Phillips-109, 7-Wayne Koehler-105, 8-Tim West-102, 9-Melvin Pierson-90, 10-Owen Carbee-66.

NEXT USAC DMA MIDGET RACE: July 25 – Bear Ridge Speedway - Bradford, Vermont

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HULL MAKES IT TWO OUT OF THREE AT BEAR RIDGE

By: John DaDalt

Bradford, Vermont (July 25, 2020).....For the second time in three races, defending series champion Will Hull turned in a strong performance to win the USAC-DMA midget feature at Bear Ridge Speedway.

Hull started outside row three in the feature and it didn’t take long for him to get to the front. Within two laps of the start he was in second place and began pressing Justin Phillips for the lead. The move came on the fourth lap with Hull getting by Phillips in turn three. Once in front Hull’s lead was never threatened as he pulled away to a comfortable win. Hull was pleased with his car’s performance.

“The car was really good. I lost the brakes with six laps to go and had to back up my entry (into the turn) a lot. But until then it felt like I could do whatever I wanted with the car.”

While Hull was cruising along on his own the race behind him for second was heating up. Brandon Piastka drove around his Miller Racing teammate Phillips on lap 10 but was not able to put any distance between the two as they would spend the remainder of the race fighting it out for position.

Jeff Champagne, Seth Carlson and Joe Krawiec were working their way through the field after starting in the fifth and sixth rows. Carlson got to the front first and was soon working on passing Phillips and Piastka but had difficulty keeping the momentum up on the slick track. Former series champion Krawiec steadily worked his way up into the top five and began challenging Carlson for fourth.

The race for second changed on lap 22. The caution flag flew for a mix up between Phillips, Champagne and Krawiec. Phillips kept going and restarted in third with Champagne and Krawiec going to the tail of the field. A disappointing end for Krawiec.

"It was a super slick track, and it took some aggressive moves in the early race to make my way from 9th to 4th. I gave the outside a try on the restart but couldn't find any grip, so I was biding my time on the bottom." "(The contact) effectively ended our night. A big thank you to Ray Miller Racing for this amazing opportunity."

On the re-start, Carlson used the high side to pass both Phillips and Piastka to take over second. Carlson was unable to chase down Hull and finished just under one second behind. "The track was much slicker this week than last week, but we have made some major strides in our program on a slick track" stated Carlson. "Congrats to Will on his win. There was some close racing all the way through the pack, it was a good time" he added to sum up the evening.

Phillips ended up in fourth place but enjoyed racing his teammate Piastka. "I had a blast racing with Brandon. I gave it all I had to pressure him into a mistake, but he held the bottom every lap and kept me behind. Wish we could have landed a podium but overall, it was a good run for the both of us and Miller Racing." Fifth place went to Floyd Billington.

Seymour Performance Products heat race winners were Will Hull and Brandon Piastka. Melvin Pierson was nursing two broken ribs from his flip last week. Pierson ran very well in his heat but did not start the feature. Scott Holcomb returned to the series in the Skip Matczak #2 which he brought home in sixth place. The USAC-DMA midgets will be off next week but will return to action at Bear Ridge Speedway on Saturday August 8.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION RACE RESULTS: July 25, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. 3-Will Hull, 2. 33-Melvin Pierson, 3. 16-Justin Phillips, 4. 50-Owen Carbee, 5. 77-Jeff Champagne, 6. 92-P.J. Bleau, 7. 5-Tim West, 8. 91-Wayne Koehler. NT

SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. 7-Brandon Piastka, 2. 4-Seth Carlson, 3. 17-Justin Sheridan, 4. 44-Floyd Billington, 5. 1B-Joe Krawiec, 6. 2-Scott Holcomb, 7. 42-Manny Dias, 8. A1-Jeff Horn. NT

FEATURE: (25 laps) 1. Will Hull, 2. Seth Carlson, 3. Brandon Piastka, 4. Justin Phillips, 5. Floyd Billington, 6. Scott Holcomb, 7. Patrick Bleau Jr., 8. Jeff Horn, 9. Justin Sheridan, 10. Joe Krawiec, 11. Manny Dias, 12. Wayne Koehler, 13. Jeff Champagne, 14. Owen Carbee, 15. Tim West.

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-4 Justin Phillips, Laps 5-25 Will Hull.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION POINTS: 1-Seth Carlson-220, 2-Brandon Piastka-199, 3-Will Hull-194, 4-Justin Phillips-183, 5-Manny Dias-179, 6-Justin Sheridan-178, 7-Wayne Koehler-149, 8-Tim West-140, 9-Owen Carbee-130, 10-Floyd Billington-129.

NEXT USAC DMA MIDGET RACE: August 8 – Bear Ridge Speedway - Bradford, Vermont

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CARLSON CORRALS DMA VICTORY AT BEAR RIDGE

By: John DaDalt

Bradford, Vermont (August 8, 2020).....Once again, the Seals-It Racing Team of Skip Matczak was in victory lane after the USAC DMA midget race at Bear Ridge Speedway on Saturday, August 8.

Seth Carlson started tenth and took advantage of a lap ten restart to pass early race leader Melvin Pierson and go on to record his second win of the 2020 season. Carlson along with teammate Will Hull have accounted for all four wins in USAC DMA midget competition this year.

Pierson and Jeff Horn brought the field to the green flag with Pierson jumping out to a commanding lead. Carlson wasted little time in getting up to the top five and using whichever lane was open, he moved into second place by lap seven. From there he began to reel in Pierson.

On lap ten, P.J. Bleau got into trouble and upside down in turn two bringing out the red flag. When the race resumed, Pierson and Carlson ran four or five laps of hard but clean racing before Carlson got the upper hand going around the outside of Pierson. The two ran close for a number of laps as Pierson did not give up the point easily. Eventually Carlson pulled away to a 2 second gap and held that for the remainder of the race.

While Carlson and Pierson were battling for the lead, Miller Racing teammates Joe Krawiec and Justin Phillips were working their way up into the top five. Both cars looked strong but slightly off the leader's pace. The racing surface was in great condition with good, clean racing throughout the field.

Carlson was a happy winner and praised both the track and the man he had to pass for the win. "Melvin did an awesome job; I think he will be a strong contender weekly. The track was really fun and provided multi-groove racing for the midgets. Hopefully, we can see more of that in the weeks to come."

Phillips continues to knock on the door of victory lane. He finished third tonight which was his third finish in the top four this year so a win is getting close. "Yes, we're definitely close but need to find a little more speed to catch the top few guys. The track was awesome with a little moisture in it. It really gave us two solid grooves to run. I think we were actually faster around the top, which is pretty rare at Bear Ridge. I feel like we've got some good momentum built as we go to Albany-Saratoga next week. That has always been my favorite track to run so I'm pretty excited."

Former series champion Krawiec had his best finish of the season bringing the Ray Miller Racing #1 home in fourth place. Krawiec also praised the track. "First off, my hat is off to (track owner) Butch Elms and the track crew, they gave us a great track throughout the entire night that I felt made for some exciting racing. As for the car, we took some major swings at the setup where I think we learned a lot and also found some additional speed. Overall, after a tough few weeks, it's good to have a solid finish to build upon." Krawiec added "Again, thank you to (car owners) Ray Miller and Zettie Shookus for everything."

Manny Dias ran strong in winning the second heat but an early spin in the feature sent him to the tail of the field. Dias then had a strong run to work his way back to fifth at the checkered flag.

Two-time 2020 feature winner Hull had a shock broken by debris and had to pit under caution. Hull did not lose a lap but was off the pace and finished 12th.

Horn and Dias each won their second Seymour Performance Products heat races of the season. Horn's win was highlighted by a duel with Pierson that saw Pierson take the lead for a lap but then nearly spun in turn four allowing Horn to get back to the front. The USAC-DMA midgets will make their only appearance of the season at Albany-Saratoga Speedway in Malta, NY this coming Friday August 14.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION RACE RESULTS: August 8, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. A1-Jeff Horn, 2. 33-Melvin Pierson, 3. 12-Adam Whitney, 4. 17-Justin Sheridan, 5. 44-Floyd Billington, 6. 92-P.J. Bleau, 7. 11-Alex Rose, 8. 50-Todd Hayward, 9. 5-Tim West.

SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. 42-Manny Dias, 2. 4-Seth Carlson, 3. 7-Brandon Piastka, 4. 1B-Joe Krawiec, 5. 2-Scott Holcomb, 6. 3-Will Hull, 7. 16-Justin Phillips.

FEATURE: (25 laps) 1. Seth Carlson, 2. Melvin Pierson, 3. Justin Phillips, 4. Joe Krawiec, 5. Manny Dias, 6. Jeff Horn, 7. Brandon Piastka, 8. Justin Sheridan, 9. Adam Whitney, 10. Floyd Billington, 11. Scott Holcomb, 12. Will Hull, 13. Tim West, 14. Alex Rose, 15. Owen Carbee, 16. P.J. Bleau. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-14 Melvin Pierson, Laps 15-25 Seth Carlson.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION POINTS: 1-Seth Carlson-297, 2-Brandon Piastka-257, 3-Justin Phillips-249, 4-Manny Dias-245, 5-Will Hull-236, 6-Justin Sheridan-232, 7-Melvin Pierson-193, 8-Jeff Horn-179, 9-Tim West-178, 10-Floyd Billington-176.

NEXT USAC DMA MIDGET RACE: August 14 – Malta, New York– Albany-Saratoga Speedway

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HULL DIGS IN FOR 3RD USAC DMA MIDGET WIN OF THE YEAR

By: John DaDalt

Malta, New York (August 14, 2020).....You can forgive Will Hull if he was feeling a little beat when he rolled into victory lane after the 25 lap USAC DMA midget feature at Albany-Saratoga Speedway Friday night.

A leaking seal left him with his hands full manhandling the car for the final 15 laps of the feature without power steering. Coupled with an intense battle for the lead with Justin Phillips, Hull was worn out by night's end. It was Hull's third win of the season in Skip Matczak's Seals-It number three.

The race itself was exciting with multiple lead changes and good racing throughout the field of 15 midgets. Hull wasted little time in getting into the lead. Second on the first lap, he powered by race leader Joe Krawiec to lead lap two and began building a comfortable lead.

Whatever ailed Phillips' engine in his heat race disappeared once the green flag waved to start the main. Coming from row eight, Phillips used the low groove to pick off cars at will including a three-wide pass of Manny Dias and Joe Krawiec off turn two. Phillips was fourth on lap four, second on lap five and then began to run down Hull. With Hull running the cushion and Phillips down on the bottom the two began a battle for first.

Finally, on lap 14, Phillips took the top spot and appeared to be headed to victory. Being the champion that he is, Hull did not give up. He worked his way by Phillips on a lap 18 restart to lead laps 18 and 19. Phillips got by again to lead laps 20 and 21 before the caution flew again. The late cautions allowed the rim riding Carlson to enter the fray.

Hull got the line on Phillips and took the bottom groove away while Carlson hammered the high side to take the lead on lap 22. That was the high point for Carlson as his Seals-It number four began to sputter as it was starved for fuel. From there, Hull led the final three laps to take his third USAC DMA midget win of the year. Hull was a tired but happy winner.

"(The) race was intense and exciting swapping the lead back and forth with Justin in the closing laps. After the bad luck at Bear Ridge last week I really wanted to win at Albany-Saratoga" said race winner Hull. He then added "Justin gave me an opening on the last restart, and I was able to take the lead. I slowed up to protect the bottom." Power steering woes beset the car all night. "The night started out with a bad power steering pump in hot laps. We were able to just add oil for the heat race (which he won). The car was a rocket ship but leaked fluid badly. After winning the heat our time was spent trying to repair the leak and we never made changes (to the car) for the changing track conditions but were able to get the win without power steering."

Meanwhile, Phillips' night began with engine trouble in hot laps and his heat race.

"We couldn't get the motor running right and didn't finish practice or the heat so going into the feature we weren't optimistic."

The feature race was a different story. Phillips started in the last row and began picking off cars moving up to second by lap five."

Once we got going the engine ran fine and I started marching toward the front. Once we got battling with Will I knew I had a shot. I definitely didn't need the last caution, but overall, I can't be mad at a second-place finish, I think my experience at Albany paid off."

Third place finisher Carlson's patience almost paid off with a win.

"The bottom was really good at the beginning of the race, but I tried to stay patient on the top and wait for it to come in. With about ten to go I could tell we were making up good ground on the top. On the last restart we got up into the lead briefly, but the car started to sputter and shut down, thankfully we were still able to come home third."

It was found after the race that Carlson's car was almost out of fuel.

Melvin Pierson added another top five finish in TJ Foster's #33 charging from twelfth starting spot all the way to third before dropping back a spot to finish fourth while lap one leader Krawiec raced his Ray Miller Racing #1 to fifth.

Hull and Carlson won the Seymour Performance Products heat races. The next USAC-DMA midget race is August 22 at Bear Ridge Speedway in Bradford, Vermont.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION RACE RESULTS: August 14, 2020 – Albany-Saratoga Speedway – Malta, New York

FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Will Hull (#3 Matczak), 2. Floyd Billington (#44 Billington), 3. Jeff Horn (#A1 Mossman), 4. Joe Krawiec (#1 Miller), 5. Mike Netishen (#55 Netishen), 6. Manny Dias (#42 Dias), 7. Melvin Pierson (#33 Foster), 8. P.J. Bleau (#92 Balzer). NT

SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Seth Carlson (#4 Matczak), 2. Jeff Champagne (#77 Champagne), 3. Brandon Piastka (#7 Miller), 4. Tim West (#5 Matczak), 5. Justin Sheridan (#17 Miller), 6. Jeremy Hodge (#50 Carbee), 7. Justin Phillips (#16 Miller). NT

FEATURE: (25 laps) 1. Will Hull, 2. Justin Phillips, 3. Seth Carlson, 4. Melvin Pierson, 5. Joe Krawiec, 6. Brandon Piastka, 7. Manny Dias, 8. Jeff Horn, 9. Justin Sheridan, 10. P.J. Bleau, 11. Jeremy Hodge, 12. Mike Netishen, 13. Tim West, 14. Floyd Billington, 15. Jeff Champagne. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Lap 1 Joe Krawiec, Laps 2-14 Will Hull, Laps 15-17 Justin Phillips, Laps 18-19 Will Hull, Laps 20-21 Justin Phillips, Lap 22 Seth Carlson, Laps 23-25 Will Hull.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION POINTS: 1-Seth Carlson-369, 2-Justin Phillips-318, 3-Brandon Piastka-318, 4-Will Hull-314, 5-Manny Dias-300, 6-Justin Sheridan-282, 7-Melvin Pierson-256, 8-Jeff Horn-234, 9-Tim West-220, 10-Floyd Billington-218.

NEXT USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION RACE: August 22, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

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CARLSON WINS HIS THIRD AT BEAR RIDGE

By: John DaDalt

Bradford, Vermont (August 22, 2020).....It's a recurring scene. Will Hull wins one race and Seth Carlson the next. The trend continued at Bear Ridge Speedway Saturday night as point leader Carlson drove to his third USAC DMA feature win of the 2020 season.

Scott Holcomb and Floyd Billington brought the field around to the green flag to start the feature with Holcomb quickly getting into the lead. The Skip Matczak owned #2 has had some mechanical issues this season but things were looking much better this evening. Holcomb looked strong in winning his heat race and leading the opening laps of the feature.

Justin Sheridan and Carlson moved up into second and third place by lap two when Jeff Champagne brought out the red flag for a rollover in turn four. When the race went green, Carlson and Manny Dias shuffled Sheridan back to fourth. Carlson closed the gap on Holcomb and the two began a five-lap duel for first. Meanwhile, there were good battles for position behind the lead duo. Hull and Melvin Pierson were looking fast coming from the fifth row to challenge the top five.

On lap seven, an incident in turn one put Hull out for the night, a tough break for the three-time winner. Then, as the cars were getting into position to restart the race, leader Holcomb pulled off the track with an overheating engine. This put Carlson on point when the race resumed.

While Carlson pulled away Dias, Sheridan and Pierson settled into position behind him. Pierson dropped out on lap fourteen while in fourth place. Justin Phillips moved up from a sixth row starting spot into fourth and began to challenge Sheridan for third.

The Phillips/Sheridan duel highlighted the final laps of the race with Phillips pressuring his Ray Miller Racing teammate for third getting up alongside him a couple of times but never being able to make the pass. Dias was second and Sheridan held on for third spot with Phillips finishing fourth. Adam Whitney came in fifth for his best finish of 2020 after battling engine woes all year.

The Matczak #4 driven by Carlson was on cruise control for most of the feature and came across the finish line 2.6 seconds ahead of second place finisher Dias. Six races into the season and Carlson has three wins, one second and two third place finishes to lead the point race. "The car has been strong all year and I am really comfortable in our new Spike chassis" Carlson understated after the race.

The second-place finish for Dias was his best of 2020. "After a pretty good run last time at the Ridge we may have something. I made some minor adjustments to the car this week and we had a really good run tonight. I'm hoping to carry that through the next few races. Bear Ridge did an awesome job on track prep tonight."

It was Sheridan's second finish in the top three positions this year. "The track was fun tonight; the top groove came in nice and I tried to stay up there most of the feature. I was getting better restarts tonight and was able to put myself in a good spot for a podium. I had a lot of pressure from Phillips the last five laps and he showed me a wheel a few times. He's had a lot of speed all year, so I was lucky to still be ahead when the checkered flag came out."

Champagne had a trying night. The Westfield, Mass. charger had engine trouble last week at Albany-Saratoga Speedway and he and his father didn't finish putting the engine back together until 12:30 Saturday afternoon. They arrived at Bear Ridge in time for hot laps and finished fifth in his heat race. On lap two of the feature, however, Champagne got upside down in turn four. He was able to re-fire the car and tag the tail of the field. The engine developed a misfire, but he still brought the car home in ninth.

Champagne competed with the USAC National Midgets in their recent Eastern swing and performed well. He said of the experience "It was an absolute blast and I learned so much. At Kutztown Wednesday I didn't have any crew and made the A-main. Then we missed hot laps at Lanco and timed 12th quick. We were looking really good in our heat until I had a flat left rear tire. I raced well in the feature. I plan on doing more national (midget races) in the future; I'm just taking note of how hard those guys drive and race. I bet I learned more in those two nights than I did in 2019 total."

Brandon Piastka and Scott Holcomb won the Seymour Performance Products heat races. After a week off, the USAC DMA midgets will be back at Bear Ridge Speedway on Saturday September 8.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION RACE RESULTS: August 22, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Scott Holcomb (#2 Matczak), 2. Jeff Horn (#A1 Mossman), 3. Seth Carlson (#4 Matczak), 4. Justin Sheridan (#17 Miller), 5. Will Hull (#3 Matczak), 6. Floyd Billington (#44 Billington), 7. Mike Chaffee (#18c Miller).

SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Brandon Piastka (#7 Miller), 2. Manny Dias (#42 Dias), 3. Adam Whitney (#12 Whitney), 4. Tim West (#5 Matczak), 5. Jeff Champagne (#77 Champagne), 6. Justin Phillips (#16 Miller), 7. Melvin Pierson (#33 Foster).

FEATURE: (25 laps) 1. Seth Carlson, 2. Manny Dias, 3. Justin Sheridan, 4. Justin Phillips, 5. Adam Whitney, 6. Jeff Horn, 7. Brandon Piastka, 8. Floyd Billington, 9. Jeff Champagne, 10. Tim West, 11. Melvin Pierson, 12. Mike Chaffee, 13. Scott Holcomb, 14. Will Hull.

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-7 Scott Holcomb, 8-25 Seth Carlson.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION POINTS: 1-Seth Carlson-445, 2-Justin Phillips-382, 3-Brandon Piastka-378, 4-Manny Dias-374, 5-Will Hull-353, 6-Justin Sheridan-351, 7-Melvin Pierson-299, 8-Jeff Horn-296, 9-Floyd Billington-270, 10-Tim West-268.

NEXT USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION MIDGET RACE: September 8, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

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CARLSON OUTDUELS HULL FOR 4TH DMA WIN

By: John DaDalt

Bradford, Vermont (September 5, 2020).....Seth Carlson became the first driver to win two-straight features with the USAC DMA midgets this year as he and teammate Will Hull went toe-to-toe for 25 laps at Bear Ridge Speedway Saturday night.

The win was Carlson's fourth of the season and solidified his point lead heading into the DMA finale on September 19.

Tim West and Floyd Billington shared the front row at the start with Billington jumping out into the lead. Trouble began on lap two when Melvin Pierson flipped. Starting in fifth position, Pierson roared into the top-three and was challenging for third on lap two when he caught a competitor's wheel and flipped in turn four. Pierson was unhurt in the incident.

After the red flag, the race restarted with Billington in the lead. As has been the case all year, Hull and Carlson were on the move from the drop of the green flag, neither wanting to let the other out of their sight. Hull quickly broke into the top five, taking second on lap three and began to chase down leader Brandon Piastka. Piastka had taken first from Billington to lead laps three and four before yielding to Hull on lap five.

Carlson was only slightly behind his teammate. Using the middle groove on a dust free racetrack, Carlson was fifth on lap four, third on lap five and then took second from Piastka on lap seven. Carlson began to chip away at Hull's lead, and when he finally caught the leader, the race was on.

With Hull down low and Carlson up a groove, the two officially traded the lead three times, but at times, one would inch past the other over the course of a lap. The final pass occurred on lap 15 when the two leaders split the lapped car of Wayne Koehler with Carlson on the high side, Hull down low. Carlson emerged with a lead that he never relinquished.

While Hull was unable to get back by Carlson, he stayed within close range for the remainder of the feature. With the two cars just about equal, the lap times between the two differed slightly over the course of the feature.

Miller Racing teammates Joe Krawiec and Justin Phillips had worked their way into the top-five and pressured Piastka in another Ray Miller Racing car for third. Krawiec took third on lap 11 while Phillips had to work a little harder, finally overtaking Piastka on lap 20.

Scott Holcomb stepped into the Matczak number 2 earlier this season and has steadily improved. Two weeks ago, Holcomb had to drop out of the feature while leading with an overheating engine. With that issue fixed, Holcomb climbed from his 13th place starting spot, methodically passing the competition before breaking into the top-five on 21. The top-five at the end were Carlson, Hull, Krawiec, Phillips and Holcomb.

Carlson's night wasn't perfect. The engine shut off as he took the checkered flag to win heat race number one. A faulty ignition switch was found to be the cause. After a quick repair, the Matczak number 4 was ready for the feature.

When things are going good, racing is fun, and Carlson is having fun this year.

"The race was really close between Will and I, especially when we got up into lapped traffic, but it was a blast," said Carlson after his win.

Carlson heads into the USAC DMA Midgets' final race with the point lead as he looks to lock up his first championship with the club.

Meanwhile, third-place finisher Joe Krawiec was satisfied and optimistic.

"After a short season with both the delayed start due to Covid and me taking a few weeks off, I feel the Miller Racing number 1B is finally hitting its stride and we're showing what we've got," Krawiec stated. "Once again, Butch and crew gave us a great track throughout the night. Hopefully, we can keep the momentum up and finish the season strong."

Seymour Performance Products heat race winners were Brandon Piastka and Seth Carlson. The USAC DMA midgets will be back at Bear Ridge Speedway on Saturday September 19 for the DMA's final race of the 2020 season.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION RACE RESULTS: September 5, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

SEYMOUR PERFORMANCE FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. 4-Seth Carlson, 2. 42-Manny Dias, 3. 17-Justin Sheridan, 4. 33-Melvin Pierson. NT

SEYMOUR PERFORMANCE SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. 7-Brandon Piastka, 2. 1B-Joe Krawiec, 3. 3-Will Hull, 4. A1-Jeff Horn, 5. 16-Justin Phillips, 6. 5-Tim West, 7. 44-Floyd Billington, 8. 10-Darren Jacobs. NT

FEATURE: (25 laps) 1. Seth Carlson, 2. Will Hull, 3. Joe Krawiec, 4. Justin Phillips, 5. 2-Scott Holcomb, 6. Manny Dias, 7. Brandon Piastka, 8. Justin Sheridan, 9. Jeff Horn, 10. Floyd Billington, 11. Tim West, 12. 91-Wayne Koehler, 13. Darren Jacobs, 14. Melvin Pierson, 15. 12-Adam Whitney. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-2 Floyd Billington, Laps 3-4 Brandon Piastka, Laps 5-12 Will Hull, Laps 13-25 Seth Carlson.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION POINTS: 1-Seth Carlson-523, 2-Justin Phillips-447, 3-Brandon Piastka-438, 4-Manny Dias-436, 5-Will Hull-426, 6-Justin Sheridan-406, 7-Jeff Horn-347, 8-Melvin Pierson-338, 9-Floyd Billington-315, 10-Tim West-312.

NEXT USAC DMA MIDGET RACE: September 19, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

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CARLSON SEALS-IT WITH A DOMINATING USAC DMA PERFORMANCE

By: John DaDalt

Bradford, Vermont (September 19, 2020).....Seth Carlson of Stafford, Conn. put the icing on the cake by winning two of three segments and finishing first overall at Bear Ridge Speedway Saturday night. The win was Carlson's fifth of the season with the USAC DMA midgets and it sewed up the 2020 championship for Carlson and the Seals-It team.

The race was broken up into three segments. Ten, 15 and 20-lap features with the overall winner being the driver with the best finishes. Floyd Billington started on the front row of the 10-lap segment and ran away with the race leading every lap.

Some of the best racing of the night took place behind him as Justin Sheridan, Brandon Piastka and Seth Carlson traded positions over the last five laps before Carlson took second on the last lap. Ray Miller Racing teammates Sheridan, Piastka and Joe Krawiec rounded out the top five.

Billington has shown some speed at times this year as he has become more comfortable in the midget. The segment win and overall second place finish were Billington's best finishes of the season. Afterward, Billington spoke about his night.

"(The) track was fast and a little rough, I have to thank Will Hull for helping me get some speed in the car. I also want to thank Butch Elms for his dedication for being at the track promoting the race last night one week after being hit by a car. I hope for a speedy recovery. The midget guys are a good group of guys and fun to run with. We give each other a lot of respect."

The night wasn't over for Billington, though. After the midget main, he strapped into his SCONE sprint car and won their main event to make for a great night.

After a pause, the 15-lap segment rolled out with the field inverted based on the finish of the first segment. Defending USAC DMA midget champion Hull jumped into the Matczak number two usually driven by Scott Holcomb when Hull developed a power steering leak in his Seals-It number three in hot laps.

Hull shot out of the pack from the green flag and into second place by lap two. Hull took the lead from Brandon Piastka on lap five and was looking strong. Carlson was moving up through the field and began to chase down his teammate. The two Seals-It drivers went at it for many laps with Hull maintaining his lead until the final corner when coming off turn four to the finish Hull got loose and Carlson got by for the segment victory.

The final segment was set for 20 laps with the field inverted again. Justin Phillips was the early leader in this race while Carlson hit the high side of the track and hammered his way up to Phillips. The inevitable pass for the lead came on lap seven and from that point on Carlson was not to be caught winning the race by 4.1 seconds over Phillips. When the points were totaled up. The overall finish was Carlson first and Billington second followed by Hull, Piastka and Krawiec.

The win topped off a great season by Carlson and the Seals-It team. In eight races they won five and never finished below third. Carlson summed up the night and the season after the races.

"The night was good; we really have found some speed with our Spike chassis this year and I'm more comfortable in this car than any dirt midget I've driven before. I have to thank (car owner) Skip Matczak for building us some really reliable motors for this year, they didn't miss a beat and that goes a long way. Skip, Lloyd, Karl, Tom and my Dad are a big help to this Seals-It race program every week. We couldn't do it without those guys. I'd like to thank Seals-It, FK Bearings and Kirkey Racing Seats for their continued support throughout 2020."

Championship car owner Matczak was very satisfied with the season despite its challenges.

"Thanks to Butch and April and all of the Bear Ridge staff that we were able to enjoy racing at Bear Ridge and Albany. Butch Elms' help throughout the year was wonderful. The competition was tough this year, but our team never gave up, put in long hours, and kept a good attitude through the entire year. Seth put out an incredible amount of energy to win the championship. He had been close many times but this was the year. Karl Sentivany, Tom Rozden, Paul Carlson and Lloyd Burnham make up the at home group while Will and Erin Hull work on the 3-car from their shop in Vermont. Tim and Charlene West take care of the 5-car, so as you can see, it's a diverse group. We thank all who helped make this

championship possible and remind all our friends that we serve hot dogs and beans for lunch every Saturday. All are welcome.”

While the three-segment format is unusual, it does have its fans. Krawiec explained this after the event.

“I always enjoy these multiple race nights. It gives us more track time and the inverts always make it a fun challenge. The track was a challenge tonight, being slick on the bottom and requiring you to cowboy up to run the top but that made it exciting. Being low in the championship points, we used the night as a test to try some new things and see what direction we want to go for next year. It was a tough season, but I feel we have a good plan for next year to put us back on top.”

Engine issues kept Phillips from maintaining his good start to the season. Disappointed, but already thinking about next year, the Suffield, Conn. driver spoke after the races.

“Overall, it was a very frustrating year. When the car ran, we could easily hang with the top runners, but more often than not, we suffered engine issues that kept us from starting or finishing where we should have. We have some work to do this offseason to try and get it straightened out for next year. I want to thank Ray Miller and our entire team for the hard work they did all year. We truly are a great team that is always helping each other so that makes it a lot of fun.”

This marked the end of the 2020 racing season for the USAC DMA midgets. We would like to thank all the racers who supported us throughout the year. Thank you to Bobby Seymour and Seymour Performance Products for sponsoring our heat races and also to Butch Elms, April May Preston and the staff at Bear Ridge Speedway for a great season.

USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION RACE RESULTS: September 19, 2020 – Bear Ridge Speedway – Bradford, Vermont

FIRST SEGMENT: (10 laps) 1. Floyd Billington (#44 Billington), 2. Seth Carlson (#4 Matczak), 3. Justin Sheridan (#17 Miller), 4. Brandon Piastka (#7 Miller), 5. Joe Krawiec (#1 Miller), 6. Manny Dias (#42 Dias), 7. Will Hull (#2 Matczak), 8. Justin Phillips (#16 Miller), 9. Tim West (#5 Matczak), 10. Wayne Koehler (#91 Koehler). NT

SECOND SEGMENT: (15 laps) 1. Seth Carlson, 2. Will Hull, 3. Brandon Piastka, 4. Joe Krawiec, 5. Floyd Billington, 6. Manny Dias, 7. Justin Sheridan, 8. Justin Phillips, 9. Tim West, 10. Wayne Koehler. NT

THIRD SEGMENT: (20 laps) 1. Seth Carlson, 2. Justin Phillips, 3. Will Hull, 4. Floyd Billington, 5. Joe Krawiec, 6. Brandon Piastka, 7. Manny Dias, 8. Justin Sheridan, 9. Tim West, 10. Wayne Koehler.

OVERALL SEGMENT RESULTS: 1. Seth Carlson, 2. Floyd Billington, 3. Will Hull, 4. Brandon Piastka, 5. Joe Krawiec, 6. Justin Phillips, 7. Justin Sheridan, 8. Manny Dias, 9. Tim West, 10. Wayne Koehler.

FIRST SEGMENT FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-10 Floyd Billington.

SECOND SEGMENT FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Lap 1 Wayne Koehler, Laps 2-4 Brandon Piastka, Laps 5-14 Will Hull, Lap 15 Seth Carlson.

THIRD SEGMENT FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-6 Justin Phillips, Laps 7-20 Seth Carlson.

FINAL USAC DIRT MIDGET ASSOCIATION POINTS: 1-Seth Carlson-679, 2-Will Hull-568, 3-Brandon Piastka-568, 4-Justin Phillips-559, 5-Manny Dias-538, 6-Justin Sheridan-522, 7-Floyd Billington-455, 8-Tim West-406, 9-Joe Krawiec-383, 10-Jeff Horn-347.