

2006 USAC NATIONAL FOCUS MIDGET SEASON

Faccinto Outlasts National Focus Fields on West Coast

By: Michael Harker

For the second time in its five-year history, the USAC Ford Focus Midget Car Series held a National championship. It was announced prior to the 2005 championship the invitational two-race series that would crown a National titlist would be held on a rotating basis.

Finally, at the end of October, just weeks before the two-race series would go off, it was announced the National championship would be held at two California tracks: on the 1/5-mile Ventura Raceway dirt, and the 1/3-mile Irwindale Speedway pavement. Drivers from across the United States were invited to take part in the two races, while entries from those not invited were accepted to assist in the car count. The invitees were rewarded with extra incentives for earning their place.

When qualifying ended at Ventura, it was defending National runner-up Chris Veach coming away with fast time. The Livermore, Calif. native helped his chances by winning his 10-lap heat race, while his younger brother Cameron won the second 10-lap heat. Brian Camarillo and Dennis Howell won their heat races as well, while Northeast third-place point finisher Nick Wean burst thru the 12-lap semifeature.

But no one could stop Nic Faas in the 50-lapper. Less than a month after winning the season finale in the California Ford Focus Dirt Midget Car Series, Faas trounced the 22-car field, leading every lap and getting out to more than a straightaway advantage over Wean at the checkered flag. California Dirt champion Bobby Michnowicz was third, ahead of Michael Faccinto and Brett Engstrom.

While Faccinto wasn't necessarily keen on the dirt – he only competed in two events on the California Dirt schedule – his foray seemed to be the hardtop. He finished second in California Pavement points to champion Tim Skoglund, and was poised to do well at Irwindale, a track at which he won twice in Pavement competition heading into the season's end.

Without any hesitation, the Hanford, Calif. native took NHRA drag racer Gary Scelzi's No. 4 machine to fast qualifying time. With no heats scheduled, Faccinto accepted sixth starting position behind Levi Roberts, a rookie in the California Pavement division. Faccinto trailed Roberts for the first 43 laps, then took the point on Lap 44 and was never headed again in the 50-lapper, rushing to the victory and putting an exclamation point on the championship. Roberts went on to take third in the feature, behind 2006 Florida and Northeast champion Ryan Smith in second. Skoglund was fourth, ahead of Canadian Alison MacLeod.

The only driver to score Top-5 finishes in both races, Faccinto – the son of former USAC Supermodified driver Monte Faccinto – ended the two races 16 points ahead of Wean for the title. Smith was third in the standings, ahead of Faas and Skoglund.

Aside from Smith, Skoglund and Michnowicz, 2006 Indiana Focus champion James Robertson competed in both events, and was sixth in the final standings. Michnowicz, who bypassed the Irwindale show, finished seventh in the standings.

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USAC FORD FOCUS MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: November 18, 2006 – Ventura, California – Ventura Raceway

QUALIFYING: 1. Chris Veach, 63, Veach-13.501; 2. Brett Engstrom, 5, Engstrom-13.637; 3. Nic Faas, 17, Faas-13.806; 4. Nick Wean, 78, Wean-13.839; 5. Walt Johnson, 68, Welcomer-14.110; 6. Joey Fabozzi, 84, Fabozzi-14.127; 7. Michael Faccinto, 4, Scelzi-14.178; 8. Ricky Kirkbride, 87, Van Meter-14.255; 9. Nick Carlson, 44, Carlson-14.354; 10. Cameron Veach, 53, Veach-14.363; 11. Bobby Michnowicz, 21, Michnowicz/Zoriki-14.381; 12. Dennis Howell, 62, Howell-14.454; 13. Mario Clouser, 06, Clouser-14.619; 14. James Robertson, 42, Robertson-14.682; 15. Brian Camarillo, 48, Camland-14.719; 16. Ginny Quinones, 00, Quinones-14.720; 17. Tim Skoglund, 40, Western Speed-14.794; 18. Bobby Owens, 7, Owens-14.832; 19. John Nickel Jr., 10, Nickel-14.859; 20. Laura Hayes, 27, Hayes-14.925; 21. Jon Laski, 01, Carroll-15.039; 22. J.R. Williams, 74, Williams-15.177; 23. Ryan Smith, 55, S & S-15.375; 24. Jake Hodges, 9, Hodges-15.629; 25. Alison MacLeod, 41, Griffith/Horn-15.731; 26. Gordy Edwards, 19, Edwards-16.376.

FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Chris Veach, 2. Johnson, 3. Laski, 4. Carlson, 5. MacLeod, 6. Skoglund, 7. Clouser. 2:13.36

SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Cameron Veach, 2. Owens, 3. Fabozzi, 4. Engstrom, 5. Edwards, 6. Williams, 7. Robertson. 2:10.42

THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Camarillo, 2. Faccinto, 3. Faas, 4. Michnowicz, 5. Smith, 6. Nickel. 2:12.81

FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Howell, 2. Hodges, 3. Quinones, 4. Kirkbride, 5. Wean, 6. Hayes. NT

B-MAIN: (12 laps) 1. Wean, 2. Smith, 3. Skoglund, 4. Robertson, 5. Edwards, 6. Nickel, 7. MacLeod, 8. Williams, 9. Clouser, 10. Hayes. NT

FEATURE: (50 laps) 1. Nic Faas, 2. Nick Wean, 3. Bobby Michnowicz, 4. Michael Faccinto, 5. Brett Engstrom, 6. Tim Skoglund, 7. Chris Veach, 8. Ryan Smith, 9. Cameron Veach, 10. Walt Johnson, 11. Ginny Quinones, 12. James Robertson, 13. Dennis Howell, 14. Jon Laski, 15. Brian Camarillo, 16. Ricky Kirkbride, 17. Gordy Edwards, 18. Joey Fabozzi, 19. Nick Carlson, 20. John Nickel Jr., 21. Bobby Owens, 22. Jake Hodges. NT

**Hayes flipped during the B-Main.

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-50 Faas.

NATIONAL FORD FOCUS POINTS: 1-Faas-65; 2-Wean-58; 3-Michnowicz-52; 4-Faccinto-47; 5-Engstrom-43; 6-Skoglund-40; 7-Chris Veach-38; 8-Smith-37; 9-Cameron Veach-36; 10-Quinones-34.

FINAL FORD FOCUS CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: November 23 – Irwindale (CA) Speedway

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USAC FORD FOCUS MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: November 23, 2006 – Irwindale, California – Irwindale Speedway – Presented by BDP International

QUALIFYING: 1. Michael Faccinto, 4x, Scelzi-14.258; 2. Zach Schiff, 5, East-14.334; 3. Alison MacLeod, 4, East-14.351; 4. Ryan Smith, 55, S & S-14.355; 5. Tim Skoglund, 40, Western Speed-14.382; 6. Levi Roberts, 2, Roberts-14.433; 7. Laura Hayes, 27, Hayes-14.450; 8. Nick Wean, 78, Wean-14.457; 9. James Robertson, 42, Robertson-14.513; 10. Laura Poorter, 32, Maier-14.517; 11. Nic Faas, 17, Faas-14.525; 12. Mario Clouser, 06, Clouser-14.532; 13. Caitlin Shaw, 89, Shaw-14.579; 14. Ginny Quinones, 00, Quinones-14.629; 15. Ian Mille, 42x, Sutton-14.664; 16. Buddy Wise, 75, Miller-14.670; 17. Paul Zimmerly, 8, Sutton-14.689; 18. Joel Miller, 3, Sutton-14.761; 19. Daniel Bedford, 12, Bedford-14.784; 20. John Laski, 01, Carroll-14.800; 21. Nick Carlson, 44, Carlson-14.801; 22. Casey Riggs, 37, Riggs-14.830; 23. John Sutton, 41, Griffith/Horn-14.847; 24. Todd Hunsaker, 7, Owens-14.897; 25. J.R. Williams, 74, Williams-14.904; 26. Joey Fabozzi, 84, Fabozzi-14.917; 27. Tim Savage, 22, Champion Motorsports-14.923; 28. Adam Barth, 17x, Kruseman-14.991; 29. Cody Williams, 32x, Pankratz-15.042; 30. Brett Engstrom, 5x, Engstrom-15.096; 31. Jace Meier, 9, Sutton-29.431; 32. Bob Brewer, 5B, Brewer-NT.

B-MAIN: (12 laps) 1. Zimmerly, 2. Bedford, 3. Riggs, 4. Miller, 5. Carlson, 6. Laski, 7. Savage, 8. Engstrom, 9. C.Williams, 10. Fabozzi, 11. Barth, 12. Hunsaker, 13. Sutton, 14. J.R. Williams, 15. Meier. NT

FEATURE: (50 laps) 1. Michael Faccinto, 2. Ryan Smith, 3. Levi Roberts, 4. Tim Skoglund, 5. Alison MacLeod, 6. Laura Hayes, 7. Nick Wean, 8. James Robertson, 9. Paul Zimmerly, 10. Mario Clouser, 11. Daniel Bedford, 12. John Laski, 13. Zach Schiff, 14. Laura Poorter, 15. Ginny Quinones, 16. Nick Carlson, 17. Todd Hunsaker, 18. Joel Miller, 19. Casey Riggs, 20. Nic Faas, 21. Buddy Wise, 22. Caitlin Shaw, 23. Ian Miille. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-43 Roberts, Laps 44-50 Faccinto.

FINAL FORD FOCUS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Faccinto-97; 2-Wean-81; 3-Smith-80; 4-Faas-75; 5-Skoglund-72; 6-Robertson-55; 7-Bobby Michnowicz-52; 8-Roberts-52; 9-Quinones-49; 10-Engstrom-43.

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2006 Season Summary – National Ford Focus Midget Car Series

No. of Feature Races (Pavement/Dirt): 2 (1/1)

Most Feature Starts: Michael Faccinto, Ryan Smith, Tim Skoglund, Nick Wean, James Robertson, Jon Laski, Virginia Quinones, Nick Carlson, Nic Faas (2)

Most Feature Victories: Nic Faas, Michael Faccinto (1)

Most Laps Led: Nic Faas (50)

Most Laps Completed: N/A

Most Fast Qualifying Times: Chris Veach, Michael Faccinto (1)

Most Poles: N/A

Most Heat Wins: Chris Veach, Cameron Veach, Brian Camarillo, Dennis Howell (1)

Most Top Fives: Michael Faccinto, Tim Skoglund (2)

Most Top Tens: Michael Faccinto, Tim Skoglund, Nick Wean, Ryan Smith (2)

Most Pavement Feature Starts: Entire Starting Field; Irwindale (Calif.) Speedway

Most Dirt Feature Starts: Entire Starting Field; Ventura (Calif.) Raceway

Champion: Michael Faccinto (by 16 points)

No. of Drivers Who Started a Feature: 36

No. of Drivers to Lead a Lap: 3

Best Average Finish: Michael Faccinto (2.5)

No. of Drivers to Win a Feature: 2 (Nic Faas, Michael Faccinto)

No. of Tracks Hosting a Feature: 2 (Ventura Raceway, Irwindale Speedway)

Most Active Track (No. of Races Held): Ventura Raceway, Irwindale Speedway (1)

Most Races Led: Nic Faas, Levi Roberts, Michael Faccinto (1)

