

2017 USAC NATIONAL MIDGET SEASON REVIEW

Bayston The New Midget King

By: *Richie Murray*

Lebanon, Indiana isn't your typical small city. With a population of roughly 15,000, it's not tiny by any means, but not a metropolis of any sort. However, it seems to be the home of USAC National Midget champions as no other location has produced more total USAC National Midget wins and titles than the city located about 30 miles northwest of Indianapolis.

It shouldn't go without mentioning that all seven titles and 111 wins prior to 2017 belonged to one man – Lebanon convert Mel Kenyon – a titlist seven times over between 1967 and 1985. Yet, when Lebanon is mentioned regarding midget racing history, Kenyon now has company with Spencer Bayston bringing the USAC National Midget championship back home.

The Bayston and Kenyon connection runs deep. In his formative days of midget racing, Bayston drove Kenyon-owned racecars in competition and, in 2013, captured the USSA Kenyon Midget Series title. That championship is an honor the 19-year-old Bayston relishes, especially now that he will forever be introduced as a USAC Midget champ, just like Kenyon.

"He's the king of the midgets," the 19-year-old Bayston said of Kenyon, whom he'd driven for in Kenyon Car competition during the mid-2010s. "I get to see him every now and then; now I can go over to his shop and talk to him as a champion."

Bayston came just short of the 2016 title, and the 2017 season was set to become his next step, but things didn't begin as smoothly as anticipated. He was second in points through eight events, but he, nor any of his Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian teammates had won yet. However, it was at Kokomo during USAC Indiana Midget Week in which he looks to as a turning point.

"We picked up our first win of the year and that got the ball rolling a little bit," Bayston, who lead the series with 14 top-fives, recalled. "That lifted my confidence. Up to that point, we'd been fast, but we just hadn't fallen into any wins yet."

From the start of July onward, Bayston was precisely on point with 10 top-five results in his final 14 starts, aided by only two finishes outside the top-six in that time span and had secured the point lead by July 2. One of Bayston's focuses all year long was to win August's Belleville (Kan.) Midget Nationals, and after running second during his last two trips to the track, the team pulled out all the stops, including a new, specially built chassis to complete a 40-lap high wire act. Success on the dirt half-miles followed Bayston to September's 4-Crown Nationals at Ohio's Eldora Speedway a day following his 19th birthday to become the first driver to win Belleville and the 4-Crown in the same season since Kyle Larson in 2011.

Following another second place finish – his sixth of the year – in the penultimate round at Bakersfield (Calif.) Speedway in November, Bayston had practically wrapped up the title. All that was left standing between him and the championship entering the season-ending Turkey Night Grand Prix at Ventura (Calif.) Raceway was, literally, to sign in at pill draw. It was a complete 180 degree turn from the nerve-wracking position he was in a year ago, desperately fighting for the title.

Following his sixth second place finish of 2017 in November's penultimate round at Bakersfield (Calif.) Speedway, all left standing between Bayston and a title entering the season-ending Turkey Night Grand Prix at Ventura (Calif.) Raceway was, literally, to sign in at pill draw. It was a complete 180 degree turn from his nerve-wracking position of a year ago.

"It was nice coming into Turkey Night completely relaxed with a nice points cushion," a relieved Bayston revealed. "But it was a big sigh of relief when that checkered flew and the season was over. It's been an incredible year, a year that I will never forget. Twenty years from now, I'll still be smiling thinking back to this day."

Fifty-six points back was the consistent Shane Golobic, who finished as the series runner-up and was crowned the USAC Indiana Midget Week champ while tallying a series-leading 21 top-tens in 23 starts. Brady Bacon corralled a third-place

finish in points with three victories, highlighted by a two-night sweep of the Kokomo (Ind.) Grand Prix and another score out west at Bakersfield. Despite using the majority of his time to win the 2017 NASCAR Truck Series title, Christopher Bell still found time to drop in from time to time to become the winningest driver of the USAC National Midget season, grabbing four victories on consecutive nights at Illinois' Macon Speedway and Lincoln Speedway, once more in August at Kansas' Solomon Valley Raceway and in a slider feat with Kyle Larson at Turkey Night.

Fifty-six points back was the consistent Shane Golobic, who finished as the series runner-up and was crowned the USAC Indiana Midget Week champ while tallying a series-leading 21 top-tens in 23 starts. Brady Bacon corralled a third-place finish in points with three victories, highlighted by a two-night sweep of the Kokomo (Ind.) Grand Prix and another score out west at Bakersfield. Despite using most of his time to win the 2017 NASCAR Truck Series title, Christopher Bell still found time to become the winningest driver of the season, grabbing four victories on consecutive nights at Illinois' Macon and Lincoln Speedways, once more in August at Kansas' Solomon Valley Raceway and in a slider fest with Kyle Larson at Turkey Night.

Chad Boat picked up three August triumphs, including his third-straight at Belleville in a prelim, then endured a wild one at PA's Path Valley Speedway Park where leader Thorson spun on the final corner after contact with Tyler Courtney. Boat slid Courtney on the restart and escaped with the win, then closed out the PA tour with number three at Linda's Speedway.

Courtney collected three and was among two first-time winners alongside Clauson Marshall Racing teammate Justin Grant. Courtney won the IMW opener at Montpelier and again three days later in a CMR podium sweep at Bloomington and once more at the longest track name in series history – the Illinois State Fairgrounds Multi-Purpose Arena.

Grant put himself in victory lane twice, in March's indoor opener at the Southern Illinois Center where he became the first driver in USAC history to record season-opening victories in both the National Sprint and National Midget divisions in the same year. In August at Susquehanna Speedway, both Bayston and Thorson stumbled atop the turn four cushion on the last lap while Grant darted under both for the win. Michael Pickens brought his Kiwi power for consecutive IMW victories at Gas City and Lincoln Park while Rico Abreu narrowly escaped with his third consecutive series Lawrenceburg win, passing Holly Shelton with three laps to go and kept her from becoming the first woman to win a USAC National feature. Thorson used patience to make the winning pass in August's round at Nebraska's Jefferson County Speedway, then repeated with a wire-to-wire performance at Pa's Lanco CMMS. Tanner Carrick, ninth in the standings, was named Rookie of the Year.

=====

Grant Gets USAC National Midget Win #1 at Shamrock Classic

Richie Murray – USAC Media

Du Quoin, Illinois.....Thus far, USAC's 2017 season has already become the year of Justin Grant.

The record books were rewritten in Saturday night's "Shamrock Classic" USAC Midget National Championship season opener at the Southern Illinois Center as Grant became the first driver in the 62-year history of the organization to record season-opening feature victories in both the National Sprint and National Midget divisions in a single year.

Now, the lone, California driver finds himself in an envious early-season position: sitting atop the standings in both the USAC National Sprint and National Midget series. It's a remarkable accomplishment for Grant, a driver who readily admits that his racing career was floundering less than a year ago.

“Last summer, I was sitting on the couch,” Grant recalls. “I wasn’t doing much racing. I couldn’t beg my way into a racecar. From then ‘til now, it’s just incredible. I keep thinking I’m going to wake up from a dream and it’s not going to be real.”

The dream is now reality for the 26-year-old Grant as he gladly accepted a fortuitous bout of Irish luck with 17 laps remaining when Christopher Bell saw his chance of winning fade into the haze as the lapped cars of Korey Weyant and Chris Andrews tangled in front of him on the high side of turn four. Bell became trapped in a box with the two stalled cars and the outside retaining wall surrounding him as he looked for an escape.

Just moments before, second-running Grant had decided to take his shot at Bell and the race lead. Just seconds later, the move proved to be a wise one as he avoided the mayhem and came away with the lead on the ensuing restart.

“It was just kind of a chance deal,” Grant believes. “I’d been kind of shadowing him, waiting and waiting for lapped traffic to try and take a shot at him. I thought the top was slowing down enough that I could maybe make a move on the bottom if he caught some lapped traffic on the top. As soon as we caught that pack of cars on the top, I dove to the bottom in turn three to try and take a shot and capitalize. It just happened to work out for me with those guys crashing right in front of him. I don’t know why I picked that lap to do it or why it worked out that way, but I’ll take it.”

On the lap 34 restart, a new, but familiar member joined the fray at the front of the field in the name of defending “Shamrock Classic” winner Shane Golobic.

Golobic, originally beginning the 50-lap feature from the 14th spot, busted his way from fifth to second in quick fashion when action resumed. Soon enough, Golobic was right on the tail of Grant for the lead with 12 laps to go until clipping the berm on the inside of turn two. That dropped Golobic back a bit as Grant began to create a bit of separation between him and his CMR teammate.

In the final five circuits, Golobic had reeled Grant in as the two weaved their way through the tail-end of the field. The two dipped and dove between the lapped cars of Weyant and Daniel Adler as the pair threaded through the eye of a needle in a game of racing limbo to see who could be the first to get the lowest on the racing surface.

“I caught sight of Shane (Golobic) off the middle of (turns) three and four. I kind of got a run back around him off the cushion of (turn) four. I knew he started really deep and if he’d come from that far back on the bottom, I knew I needed to get back to the bottom in a hurry. I had just enough to get back by him off (turn) four and shut him down on the bottom getting into (turn) one. From there on out, it’s about not missing the bottom and not getting caught up on the berm.

Once it started laying rubber, I knew if I didn’t get out of the rubber, he wasn’t going to be able to get by me. Catching lapped cars and rubber is highly frustrating. You can’t get out of it to get around him and they’re not going to get out of it. You just have to settle in, follow, stay in it and hope you’re not a sitting duck.”

Grant never flinched an inch as Golobic swarmed Grant’s tail tank coming to the checkered flag to no avail, providing Grant his first career USAC National Midget victory in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Priority Aviation/Spike/Stanton SR-11 over Golobic, Jerry Coons Jr., Brady Bacon and Brent Beauchamp.

The spirit of Bryan Clauson was prominent throughout the event, which was promoted by Bryan’s fiancée Lauren Stewart. The winner’s share of the purse was \$3900 in honor of Bryan who drove the No. 39 to consecutive USAC National Midget titles in 2010 and 2011. Grant’s drive was reminiscent of Bryan’s magnificence throughout the years as he piloted Bryan’s father’s, Tim Clauson’s, car to victory lane Saturday night.

The combination of the Southern Illinois Center, plus Tim Clauson and Tyler Ransbottom on the wrenches has proven to be an unstoppable equation since the first USAC-sanctioned MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP RACE at the one-sixth-mile indoor oval in December of 2015. Since then, the pairing has earned four-straight victories with four different drivers: Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Shane Golobic, Tyler Courtney and, the latest, Justin Grant.

"They're racecars are fast," Grant exclaimed. "They were fast at the Chili Bowl. They're fast here. They've clearly got this place figured out. I've been racing a long time now and I've never been this quick. It's obviously the car I'm sitting in. Tim and Tyler do such a good job. They're so good at what they do and it's such a pleasure to drive for them."

Shane Golobic has yet to finish outside the top-two in his three Southern Illinois appearances since his inaugural "Shamrock Classic" victory in March of 2016. On Saturday night, he collected a close second behind his teammate in his Clauson Marshall/Matt Wood Racing/Elk Grove Ford – Driven 2 Save Lives/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

"I don't know if it's me who's got this place figured out or if it's the team. I'm thinking it's the team," a humble Golobic said. "The team's won the last four here and I've finished second the last two times and won the time before that. This team obviously has this place figured out and that's made it very easy for me to get the track figured out. I think if we could've gotten a little further up on Justin before he changed lanes, it might've been a different story. He switched lanes at just the right time just like the veteran that he is. If I'm going to be beaten by anybody, I'm glad it's by a teammate."

"I kind of had the bottom figured out," Golobic continued. "I was catching a little bit of rubber on the bottom. As I was reeling Justin (Grant) in, I just needed to get to the point where I could get wheel-to-wheel with him. I just couldn't quite get there. If he wasn't my teammate, I might have had a little different mindset getting into (turn) three when he shut the door down there. I might've shoved the car in there a little bit harder, but I lifted and hoped to get another opportunity in traffic. That opportunity never showed up; Justin never made a mistake."

Jerry Coons Jr. equaled his best finish of a year ago at the Belleville (Kans.) High Banks with a third-place run Saturday night in his Petry-Goff Motorsports/Petry Excavating – Gray Auto/Spike/Stanton Toyota.

"I started off the race a little too tight on the right rear," Coons explained. "It kind of came to us and got better midway through the race. I thought we were pretty good until the early yellow came out and we got smoked on the bottom. I went down there; it was a little free and I made a bunch of adjustments on the shocks. Then, the rubber really started laying down and I got too tight. I was going back on the shock adjustment. The car was really good all throughout the night. Hopefully, we can go on to the next one and keep piling up top-threes."

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: March 18, 2017 – Southern Illinois Center – Du Quoin, Illinois – Shamrock Classic

FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Tyler Thomas (#91T Thomas), 2. Daniel Robinson (#57D McCreery), 3. Christopher Bell (#21 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 4. Andy Malpocker (#22 Malpocker), 5. Mark Chisholm (#56x Fifty6x), 6. Tim Siner (#15 Siner-Cylix), 7. Shane Golobic (#17w Clauson Marshall/Wood), 8. Tyler Courtney (#7BC Clauson Marshall), 9. Robert Bell (#71½ Bell). NT

SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Justin Grant (#39BC Clauson Marshall), 2. Josh Most (#92m Most), 3. Justin Peck (#7K Irwin), 4. Tyler Nelson (#91 Harris), 5. Chad Boat (#84 Tucker-Boat), 6. Ryan Robinson (#71 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 7. Shane Morgan (#15m Morgan), 8. Kyle Cummins (#5 Briscoe), 9. David Budres (#31 Manic). NT

THIRD HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Colten Cottle (#5c Cottle), 2. Jake Neuman (#3N Neuman), 3. Tanner Thorson (#67 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 4. Gage Walker (#7 Walker), 5. Derek Hagar (#9JR Hagar-Proctor), 6. Holly Shelton (#67K Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 7. Isaac Chapple (#52 Chapple), 8. Kellen Conover (#2 Baue). NT

FOURTH HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Jerry Coons Jr. (#25 Petry-Goff), 2. Brent Beauchamp (#11B B & B), 3. Jeff Zelinski (#68 SFHR), 4. Tony DiMattia (#50 DiMattia), 5. Kory Schudy (#28 Sawyer), 6. Tanner Carrick (#71K (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 7. Cole Fehr (#15F Live Loud). NT

FIFTH HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Matt Veatch (#56v Fifty6x), 2. Brady Bacon (#76m FMR), 3. Joe B. Miller (#51B Grogan), 4. Daniel Adler (#50A Adler), 5. Chris Andrews (#91A Thomas), 6. Mitchell Davis (#15s Morgan), 7. Chris Urish (#77u Casson), 8. Kyle Schuett (#9K Schuett). NT

SIXTH HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Tony Roney (#1T Roney), 2. Billy Wease (#12w Wease), 3. Korey Weyant (#9 Allen), 4. Terry Babb (#88 Babb), 5. Spencer Bayston (#97 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 6. Chris Baue (#35 Baue), 7. Brayton Lynch (#1K Kunz), 8. Alex Bright (#77 Bright). NT

ALSO AT THE TRACK: Dave Darland (#11 Gray).

LAST CHANCE QUALIFIER: (10 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Alex Bright, 3. Kyle Schuett, 4. Kyle Cummins, 5. David Budres, 6. Cole Fehr, 7. Robert Bell, 8. Isaac Chapple. NT

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST QUALIFIER: (12 laps) 1. Brent Beauchamp, 2. Jerry Coons Jr., 3. Josh Most, 4. Andy Malpocker, 5. Chris Andrews, 6. Brady Bacon, 7. Ryan Robinson, 8. Mitchell Davis, 9. Jeff Zelinski, 10. Chris Baue. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION (CSI) SECOND QUALIFIER: (12 laps) 1. Billy Wease, 2. Joe B. Miller, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Tony DiMattia, 5. Jake Neuman, 6. Spencer Bayston, 7. Tyler Nelson, 8. Shane Morgan, 9. Matt Veatch, 10. Brayton Lynch. NT

CHALK STIX THIRD QUALIFIER: (12 laps) 1. Justin Grant, 2. Korey Weyant, 3. Tony Roney, 4. Daniel Adler, 5. Justin Peck, 6. Holly Shelton, 7. Chris Urish, 8. Mark Chisholm, 9. Terry Babb, 10. Tim Siner. NT

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH QUALIFIER: (12 laps) 1. Christopher Bell, 2. Gage Walker, 3. Shane Golobic, 4. Colten Cottle, 5. Chad Boat, 6. Kory Schudy, 7. Tyler Thomas, 8. Tanner Carrick, 9. Daniel Robinson, 10. Derek Hagar. NT

FIRST SEMI: (15 laps) 1. Brady Bacon, 2. Daniel Adler, 3. Chris Andrews, 4. Mark Chisholm, 5. Andy Malpocker, 6. Chad Boat, 7. Derek Hagar, 8. Kyle Schuett, 9. Brayton Lynch, 10. Tyler Courtney, 11. Matt Veatch, 12. Jeff Zelinski, 13. Mitchell Davis, 14. Tyler Thomas, 15. Kory Schudy, 16. Tyler Nelson. NT

SECOND SEMI: (15 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Joe B. Miller, 3. Spencer Bayston, 4. Justin Peck, 5. Tim Siner, 6. Ryan Robinson, 7. Terry Babb, 8. Alex Bright, 9. Shane Morgan, 10. Kyle Cummins, 11. Chris Urish, 12. Tony DiMattia, 13. Tanner Carrick, 14. Holly Shelton, 15. Daniel Robinson, 16. Chris Baue. NT

FEATURE: (50 laps) 1. Justin Grant, 2. Shane Golobic, 3. Jerry Coons Jr., 4. Brady Bacon, 5. Brent Beauchamp, 6. Tony Roney, 7. Josh Most, 8. Jake Neuman, 9. Billy Wease, 10. Christopher Bell, 11. Colten Cottle, 12. Spencer Bayston, 13. Gage Walker, 14. Tanner Carrick, 15. Daniel Adler, 16. Korey Weyant, 17. Chad Boat, 18. Chris Andrews, 19. Mark Chisholm, 20. Justin Peck, 21. Tanner Thorson, 22. Joe B. Miller. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Lap 1 Justin Grant, Laps 2-33 Christopher Bell, Laps 34-50 Justin Grant.

****Kellen Conover flipped during the third heat. Cole Fehr flipped during the fourth heat.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Justin Grant-70, 2-Shane Golobic-67, 3-Jerry Coons Jr.-64, 4-Brady Bacon-61, 5-Jake Neuman-49, 6-Spencer Bayston-39, 7-Gage Walker-37, 8-Tanner Carrick-35, 9-Chad Boat-29, 10-Tanner Thorson-23.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACES: April 8, 2017 – Kokomo Speedway – Kokomo, Indiana – Kokomo Grand Prix

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Brent Beauchamp (Simpson Race Products First Qualifier Winner)

Billy Wease (CSI Second Heat Winner)

Justin Grant (Chalk Stix Third Heat Winner)

Christopher Bell (Indy Race Parts Fourth Heat Winner)

Gage Walker (Wilwood Brakes 13th Place Finisher Winner).

KSE RACING PRODUCTS/ELLIOTT'S TRAILERS HARD CHARGER: Shane Golobic (14th-2nd)

=====

Bacon Back in Kokomo Victory Lane; Takes Grand Prix Night 1

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Kokomo, Indiana.....Brady Bacon entered Saturday night's USAC Midget National Championship feature as the only driver in the field to have previously won a race in the series at Indiana's Kokomo Speedway.

After 30 laps were complete, the story remained the same as Bacon outdueled Spencer Bayston in the waning laps to take his fourth career series win and second at Kokomo, the site of his very first USAC National win in 2006.

The Broken Arrow, Oklahoma native pulled double-duty Saturday on night one of the Kokomo Grand Prix. Moments after finishing in the runner-up spot to Justin Grant in the Kokomo Sprint Car portion of the program, Bacon lined up outside the second row at the start of the Midget feature.

Wasting no time, Bacon found his way to the front of the field, slipping under Chad Boat for the race lead exiting turn two on the opening lap. Bacon worked the middle while Boat climbed the ladder up to the top side as the pair locked down the top two positions in the opening third of the event.

After a caution for a Tyler Nelson spin, the ensuing lap 10 restart witnessed the most frightening incident of the evening. Third-running Tyler Courtney biked his way into the first turn, then proceeded to flip nose-to-tail several times before coming to a rest on top of the hood of Clauson Marshall Racing teammate Justin Grant's car just short of the turn one concrete. Courtney would climb out of the car under his own power, though his night was finished. Grant would restart from the tail and, by race end, would claw his way back to a sixth-place finish.

On the second lap 10 restart, Boat's right foot was cocked and locked as he fired past Bacon into turn one. Bacon responded by diving underneath Boat, outpacing him to regain the lead at the exit of turn two.

Meanwhile, ProSource Fast Qualifier Bayston entered the fray and, after getting by Boat for second, two laps later he was in position to grab the lead. A Bayston turn three slider momentarily put him in front before Bacon countered by slipping back under to retake the lead at the stripe. Bayston kept his foot in it and hit the topside where he powered by Bacon to take the top spot on the 13th lap.

Bayston quickly separated himself from the field, but Bacon stayed in touch, reeling Bayston back in to challenge him for first with less than ten laps remaining. With seven to go, the two battled wheel-to-wheel with Bacon pulling the front wheels to the sky as he rallied to the lead. Bayston got back by to reclaim the position at the head of the pack, though Bacon put his foot down and possessed the spot for good after charging past Bayston one final time in turn four.

From that point forward, Bacon ripped the high-side between turns one and two and the middle in three and four where nobody else was able to lay a finger on him in the waning laps as he took the victory by a little over a half-second in his

FMR Racing/Brown & Miller Racing Solutions – Black Watch Farms/Beast/Toyota over Bayston, Thorson, Kevin Thomas Jr. and Jerry Coons Jr.

“I knew the top was probably going to come in,” Bacon remembers. “I felt the bottom slowing down. When you’re in the lead, it’s hard to really know what to do. I knew I was going to be tight after that red (flag). I was afraid that hole in (turn) one was going to get me if I moved up too early. Once (Bayston) got by me, I moved up and got some speed back up and he started freeing up in (turns) three and four. We were able to get the diamond pattern going over there and got a really good run off of four, and that’s how we got by him.”

“It was tough; we bounced around on the cushion a couple times,” Bacon continued. “(Bayston) did the same thing. I got pretty close to the wall of (turn) four a couple times. Once we got a few laps and the tires got hot and got some air in them, it was a little easier. It was a little hairy a couple times, but you got to drive hard if you want to win these races, especially here. I didn’t want to give up. I didn’t want to move up until somebody proved to me the top was faster. Bob (East) gave me a car good enough that I could move up there and still go fast.”

Five drivers competed in both the midget and sprint features Saturday night, including Bacon. The differences between the two disciplines are stark, but Bacon was able to master the challenge, finishing first and second in the respective features.

“The top is faster in the sprint car,” Bacon explains. “There were things I didn’t even notice in the sprint car when I got out there in the midget. I was like, ‘Man, that hole looks a lot bigger now that in in a midget!’ Sprint cars go through the bumps a little better. Midgets are a little more sensitive to it. You don’t have the horsepower in a midget, so you have to be careful and it might be too far around the top at the beginning. The track was great as usual. It’s nice to get a good racetrack, somewhere you can really open it up and race on. Hopefully, we get that again tomorrow and can put on another good show.”

Lebanon, Indiana’s Spencer Bayston came up just short of his second career USAC National Midget victory, instead having to settle for his fifth second-place finish dating back to 2016 after leading 11 laps in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/Curb Records - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

“I got out front and Brady found the bottom in (turns) three and four better than I did,” Bayston conceded. “We had a really good racecar. I just thought we were better in (turns) one and two than he was, but he was just killing me so much in three and four, he got me.

“The first time I came here, I didn’t finish the race and the time after that, I don’t think I even made the A-main,” Bayston added. “We’ve made a lot of progress. It’s all thanks to the people around me who gave me the opportunity and taught me as much as they have.”

Defending series champion Tanner Thorson overcame an early-race skirmish with Tyler Courtney that shuffled him from fourth to seventh but persevered to take third in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

“We had a great car all night,” Thorson praises. “Al (Scroggins) worked his butt off to try and get this thing better and better throughout the night. The track was a little bit tricky tonight, but we’ll get back to the shop, get everything cleaned up and try again tomorrow.”

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: April 8, 2017 – Kokomo Speedway – Kokomo, Indiana – Kokomo Grand Prix

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.318; 2. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.320; 3. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-13.326; 4. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-13.346; 5. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.382; 6. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-13.486; 7. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-13.499; 8. Davey Ray, 33, RayPro-13.507; 9. Kevin Thomas Jr., 7B, KBR-13.595; 10. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.609; 11. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.616; 12. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-13.630; 13. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-13.652; 14. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-13.719; 15. Chris Windom, 5, Baldwin-13.722; 16. Tony DiMattia, 50, TDM-13.742; 17. Shane Hollingsworth, 85, Hollingsworth-13.750; 18. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-13.796; 19. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 27, Klaasmeyer-13.802; 20. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-13.918; 21. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-13.948; 22. Billy Wease, 12w, Wease-13.949; 23. Anton Julian, 44, Pace-13.991; 24. Jake Neuman, 3N, Neuman-14.023; 25. Gage Walker, 7, Walker-14.100; 26. Ray Seach, 2, Seach-14.102; 27. Tyler Nelson, 88T, Nelson-14.116; 28. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-14.263; 29. Kyle Schuett, 9K, Schuett-14.297; 30. Scott Orr, 88, Orr-14.520; 31. Justin Dickerson, 21D, Dickerson-14.521; 32. Bear Wood, 8JR, LW-14.568; 33. Cole Fehr, 15F, Live Loud-14.578; 34. Chase Jones, 22, Petry/Goff-14.747; 35. Brad Kraus, 6B, Kraus-15.052.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Dave Darland, 3. Kevin Thomas Jr., 4. Ryan Robinson, 5. Alex Bright, 6. Gage Walker, 7. Kyle Schuett, 8. Cole Fehr, 9. Shane Hollingsworth. 2:19.06

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tyler Thomas, 2. Shane Golobic, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Chad Boat, 5. Billy Wease, 6. Chase Jones, 7. Tanner Carrick, 8. Scott Orr, 9. Ray Seach. NT

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Justin Grant, 2. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 3. Chris Windom, 4. Brady Bacon, 5. Holly Shelton, 6. Tyler Nelson, 7. Anton Julian, 8. Brad Kraus, 9. Justin Dickerson. 2:18.59

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Jerry Coons Jr., 3. Jake Neuman, 4. Davey Ray, 5. Ryan Greth, 6. Brayton Lynch, 7. Bear Wood, 8. Tony DiMattia. NT

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Holly Shelton, 2. Alex Bright, 3. Gage Walker, 4. Tanner Carrick, 5. Tyler Nelson, 6. Ryan Greth, 7. Kyle Schuett, 8. Anton Julian, 9. Billy Wease, 10. Chase Jones, 11. Brayton Lynch, 12. Brad Kraus, 13. Justin Dickerson, 14. Bear Wood, 15. Cole Fehr, 16. Ray Seach. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Brady Bacon, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Kevin Thomas Jr., 5. Jerry Coons Jr., 6. Justin Grant, 7. Chris Windom, 8. Tyler Thomas, 9. Dave Darland, 10. Ryan Robinson, 11. Chad Boat, 12. Holly Shelton, 13. Gage Walker, 14. Alex Bright, 15. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 16. Jake Neuman, 17. Tanner Carrick, 18. Brayton Lynch, 19. Tyler Nelson, 20. Shane Golobic, 21. Ryan Greth, 22. Kyle Schuett, 23. Tyler Courtney, 24. Davey Ray. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-12 Brady Bacon, Laps 13-23 Spencer Bayston, Laps 24-30 Brady Bacon.

****Tyler Courtney flipped on lap 10 of the feature.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Brady Bacon-140, 2-Justin Grant-133, 3-Jerry Coons Jr.-129, 4-Spencer Bayston-120, 5-Tanner Thorson-98, 6-Shane Golobic-97, 7-Jake Neuman-86, 8-Chad Boat-76, 9-Gage Walker-76, 10-Tyler Thomas-67.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: April 9, 2017 – Kokomo Speedway – Kokomo, Indiana – Kokomo Grand Prix

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Spencer Bayston (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Spencer Bayston (Simpson Race Products First Heat Race Winner)

Tyler Thomas (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. Second Heat Race Winner)

Justin Grant (Chalk Stix Third Heat Race Winner)

Tyler Courtney (Indy Race Parts Fourth Heat Race Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Tyler Thomas (20th to 8th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Gage Walker

=====

Bacon Brings His Broom, Sweeps Kokomo Grand Prix

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Kokomo, Indiana.....The month of April has quickly become the “sweeps” period for USAC’s national series as Brady Bacon became the second driver in as many weeks to complete an undefeated weekend by capturing both nights of the “Kokomo Grand Prix” at Indiana’s Kokomo Speedway.

One week after Chris Windom claimed victories in consecutive nights at Lawrenceburg (Ind.) Speedway and the Terre Haute (Ind.) Action Track in USAC AMSOIL National Sprint Car and Silver Crown action, respectively, it was Bacon’s turn to do a little spring cleaning of his own as he cleared out space in his cabinet to bring home a pair of brand-new trophies earned this weekend in USAC National Midget competition.

The Broken Arrow, Oklahoma native took the lead from Tanner Thorson just shy of the midway point of the 30-lap affair after starting from the outside of the fifth row, then promptly dominated the second-half to grab his fifth-career USAC National Midget feature win, and third at Kokomo.

Sunday night was nearly identical to Saturday night for Bacon. For the second straight evening, he entered the Midget feature just after posting a runner-up finish in the Kokomo Sprint Car main event. Yet, it would take Bacon just a little bit longer to reach the point as opposed to the night prior, but not by that much.

Pole sitter Chad Boat would control the pace early on as he slid up to the top to grab the lead in turn one on the opening lap. Outside second-row starter Tanner Thorson would instantly pose a threat as he took a peek to the inside of Boat off turn two on laps three and four.

On the sixth circuit, Thorson made his charge on the bottom, but Boat was able to hold onto his advantage by the skin of his teeth, more accurately the circumference of a single front wheel. One lap later, Thorson duplicated the same move, but this time was able to get enough of a run off turn four to propel him to the lead by a single wheel over Boat.

Boat wouldn’t accept this fate without a fight and, instead, worked his way back around the topside to retake the lead from Thorson on the eighth lap. However, the move was negated due to a yellow for the turned-around car of ProSource Fast Qualifier Justin Grant, which reverted the running order back to the last completed lap.

Meanwhile, lurking in the shadows was third-running Bacon who had already overtaken seven positions in the first seven laps. After the green flag dropped for the restart, Thorson led the way on the bottom as Boat stayed true to the top. Bacon followed Thorson’s lead and used the low line to motor past Boat for second.

The chase was on as Thorson led a train on the bottom with Bacon in tow as he aimed to escape the rapid pursuit of the previous night’s winner. On the 13th lap, with little room for error and Bacon ready to pounce, Thorson left the door

cracked open at the exit of turn four, which was just enough daylight for Bacon to squeeze through to snare the race lead away.

Just as it was the night before, Bacon put his Bob East-wrenched, FMR Racing/Brown & Miller Racing Solutions – Black Watch Farms/Beast/Toyota anywhere he pleased, running the bottom between turns one and two and using a diamond pattern on the other end of the racetrack in which he'd enter on the cushion in turn three and exit turn four on the bottom.

The interval between him and Thorson continued to expand in the final laps, growing to a substantial 4.5 second margin as Bacon took the checkered ahead of Thorson, Tyler Courtney, Rico Abreu (who charged from 22nd to 4th after flipping earlier in the night during time trials) while Kevin Thomas Jr. rounded out the top-five.

Bacon's victory puts him in an exclusive club of drivers who've tallied at least three USAC National Midget wins at Kokomo, joining Rich Vogler (7), Mel Kenyon (6), Jimmy Davies (3) and Bob Wente (3). Bacon's monumental weekend has given him a healthy early-season point cushion where he stands with a 30-point lead in the standings as the series takes an extended break before returning May 19 at Tri-City Speedway in Granite City, Ill.

"We had to work a little harder tonight," Bacon remarked. "We were able to get to the front really quickly and then the track changed quite a bit. It got pretty treacherous with some holes on the bottom. I just happened to be at the right place at the right time every time and made some good decisions. I'm just glad to have a car I can be confident moving around in, especially here. You've got a lot of options and there's a big difference between the top and bottom. The car worked great wherever it went. We've worked so hard and, last year, we got our package together and we're finally getting the results to show for all that hard work."

Minden, Nevada's Tanner Thorson followed up a third-place run the night before with a second-place finish Sunday night in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota, getting back into the groove after a tough opening to the season in Du Quoin, Ill. back in March.

"We just took what it gave us tonight," Thorson stated. "We've had a pretty good car here the last two days. We definitely wanted to win that one, but Brady just beat us. He was better through the holes tonight, but we'll be back, and we'll come to the next race even stronger."

Indianapolis, Indiana's Tyler Courtney took a wild tumble while running third in Saturday night's feature at Kokomo. Sunday night, the team rolled out the backup car for Courtney and took a well-earned third-place finish in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Indiana Donor Network/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

"After the start I've had this year in the midget and sprint car, to get a podium here is a pretty good confidence booster," a rejuvenated Courtney exclaimed. "Hopefully, moving forward from here will be just a little smoother sailing than the start of the year. I can't thank everybody who came to the shop last night and busted their butts. We found out just last night that our car was junk and they finished putting this backup car together, came back to the track and kept faith in me. I've got all the faith in the world in them and their racecars and what they do in the shop. I think it showed tonight."

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: April 9, 2017 – Kokomo Speedway – Kokomo, Indiana – Kokomo Grand Prix

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-13.081; 2. Kevin Thomas Jr., 7B, KBR-13.199; 3. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.246; 4. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.247; 5. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-13.347; 6. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.350; 7. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-13.385; 8. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-13.402; 9. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 27, Klaasmeyer-13.452; 10. Davey Ray, 33, RayPro-13.530; 11. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-13.554; 12. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-13.574; 13. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-13.577; 14.

Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.625; 15. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.626; 16. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-13.658; 17. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-13.690; 18. Jake Neuman, 3N, Neuman-13.804; 19. Chris Windom, 5, Baldwin-13.828; 20. Tyler Nelson, 88T, Nelson-13.869; 21. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-13.981; 22. Chase Jones, 22, Petry/Goff-13.992; 23. Kyle Schuett, 9K, Schuett-14.114; 24. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-14.118; 25. Anton Julian, 44, Pace-14.167; 26. Bear Wood, 8JR, LW-14.516; 27. Justin Dickerson, 21D, Dickerson-14.603; 28. Ray Seach, 2, Seach-14.664; 29. Rico Abreu, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-NT; 30. Gage Walker, 7, Walker-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Alex Bright, 2. Rico Abreu, 3. Justin Grant, 4. Ryan Greth, 5. Jerry Coons Jr., 6. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 7. Dave Darland, 8. Anton Julian. 2:19.35

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Jake Neuman, 2. Davey Ray, 3. Ryan Robinson, 4. Holly Shelton, 5. Kevin Thomas Jr., 6. Chase Jones, 7. Bear Wood, 8. Gage Walker. 2:18.80

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tanner Carrick, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Brady Bacon, 4. Tyler Courtney, 5. Chris Windom, 6. Shane Cottle (#9K), 7. Justin Dickerson. NT

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tyler Thomas, 2. Tanner Thorson, 3. Chad Boat, 4. Shane Golobic, 5. Tyler Nelson, 6. Brayton Lynch, 7. Ray Seach. NT

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Kevin Thomas Jr., 2. Dave Darland, 3. Chris Windom, 4. Jerry Coons Jr., 5. Chase Jones, 6. Tyler Nelson, 7. Shane Cottle, 8. Brayton Lynch, 9. Justin Dickerson, 10. Bear Wood, 11. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 12. Anton Julian, 13. Ray Seach. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Brady Bacon, 2. Tanner Thorson, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Rico Abreu, 5. Kevin Thomas Jr., 6. Spencer Bayston, 7. Dave Darland, 8. Shane Golobic, 9. Ryan Robinson, 10. Holly Shelton, 11. Davey Ray, 12. Jerry Coons Jr., 13. Alex Bright, 14. Tyler Thomas, 15. Tyler Nelson, 16. Jake Neuman, 17. Brayton Lynch, 18. Ryan Greth, 19. Chad Boat, 20. Justin Grant, 21. Chris Windom, 22. Chase Jones, 23. Tanner Carrick. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-6 Chad Boat, Laps 7-12 Tanner Thorson, Laps 13-30 Brady Bacon.

****Rico Abreu flipped during qualifying. Tucker Klaasmeyer flipped during the semi. Anton Julian flipped during the semi.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Brady Bacon-216, 2-Spencer Bayston-186, 3-Tanner Thorson-175, 4-Jerry Coons Jr.-169, 5-Justin Grant-168, 6-Shane Golobic-151, 7-Jake Neuman-125, 8-Dave Darland-120, 9-Tyler Courtney-113, 10-Ryan Robinson-113.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: May 19, 2017 – Tri-City Speedway – Granite City, Illinois – River Town Showdown

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Justin Grant (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Alex Bright (Simpson Race Products First Heat Race Winner)

Jake Neuman (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. Second Heat Race Winner)

Tanner Carrick (Chalk Stix Third Heat Race Winner)

Tyler Thomas (Indy Race Parts Fourth Heat Race Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Rico Abreu (22nd to 4th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Alex Bright

=====

Tri-City USAC Doubleheader Canceled Due to Forecasted Rain

Due to forecasted rains throughout the evening tonight and early afternoon Friday, the May 19 USAC AMSOIL National Sprint Car and Midget doubleheader at Tri-City Speedway in Granite City, Illinois has been cancelled.

Night two of the “River Town Showdown” featuring the USAC AMSOIL National Sprint Cars this Saturday night, May 20, at Federated Auto Parts Raceway at I-55 in Pevely, Missouri is still on as scheduled.

Pit gates for Saturday night open at 3pm. Gates open at 4pm and cars are on track at 6pm.

USAC’s debut at I-55 will be streamed LIVE on <http://www.SpeedShiftTV.com/>. Watch flag-to-flag coverage of the event one day later on-demand at <http://www.Loudpedal.TV/>.

Advance tickets purchased for the “River Town Showdown” at Tri-City will be refunded.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: June 6, 2017 – Montpelier Motor Speedway – Montpelier, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

=====

Courtney Connects on First USAC Midget Win in Montpelier USAC Indiana Midget Week Opener

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Montpelier, Indiana.....Just four nights ago, Tyler Courtney had yet to break into the win column in USAC competition for 2017.

A mere four nights later, the Indianapolis, Indiana native is two victories richer following last Friday night’s USAC AMSOIL National Sprint Car score at I-80 Speedway in Greenwood, Nebraska, before the latest triumph – his very first USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS-paying victory – in Tuesday’s opener for the 13th installment of USAC Indiana Midget Week at Montpelier Motor Speedway.

The 23-year-old driver used the bottom to slip past Alex Bright for the lead on the fifth lap, then immediately fended off a slider thrown by hard-charging Brady Bacon. Courtney then mastered a late-race restart to drive away for a commanding win to become the first driver ever to earn both his first USAC National Midget and National Sprint Car wins in USAC Indiana Midget Week and Indiana Sprint Week.

The 2016 Gas City “Sprint Week” winner began Tuesday night’s race from the fifth spot but quickly became a challenger after moving to third on the opening lap. Meanwhile, up front, pole sitter Alex Bright held the point as Zach Daum pursued. On lap four, Daum scampered to the high side to complete the pass of race leader Bright exiting turn two, but the yellow flag fell for a spinning Tanner Carrick before the lap could be scored, thus negating Daum’s good fortune.

On the restart, the battle at the front became a three-car dance as the trio stacked up wheel-to-wheel-to-wheel with Bacon, Courtney and Bright even-Steven exiting the second turn. One lap later, Courtney skimmed the bottom lane to take ownership of the lead between turns one and two.

“With how many good guys we had up front like Michael (Pickens) and (Kyle) Larson, I knew we had to go to the bottom at the beginning,” Courtney recalls. “I knew those guys were able to stay with me up top, so once I got past them, I knew I was going to have to get back to the top. I did that and, luckily, it started cleaning off and getting dark, so I knew I needed to stay up there because it was going to take rubber pretty soon. I feel like I had my own line in (turns) three and four by going in high and coming across the bottom. That worked for me in the heat race and I stuck with it in the feature.”

Following the same trail as Courtney was Bacon, who slid across the bottom of turn three to the top of four in front of Bright for second. He then immediately pointed his arrow squarely in the direction of race leader Courtney. Brady took a run at Courtney, serving up a slider exiting turn two on the sixth lap. Bacon came up short, and lost a tad of momentum, allowing Courtney to break away.

“In conditions like that, you just have to stay in it and hope he knows well enough not to just keep going and take both he and you out, especially when both of us are racing for a championship. Brady’s a smart racer, obviously. There was a little bit of worry, but you just have to make sure you pull your belts tight and keep going after it. The race is just 30 laps and you have to get going when you have guys like that behind you and you know they’re coming after you. You must play defense with these guys because they’ll be playing offense when you’re in the lead.”

With 20 laps remaining, Courtney’s burst saw him expand his lead to a full-straightaway as he attacked lapped traffic with authority until a yellow with three to go slowed his pace for the stopped car of Tyler Thomas. By rule, the lapped cars between first and second moved to the tail of the field at that point, erasing the substantial gap that Courtney had constructed.

When the green dropped, a mad scramble ensued for the runner-up spot as Michael Pickens, Bacon, Bright and defending Montpelier winner Kyle Larson all wagered for the runner-up spot. All that did was allow Courtney to pull away unchallenged and unscathed on the final circuits to land his first USAC MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS win in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Indiana Donor Network/Spike/Stanton SR-11 over Pickens, Larson, Bacon and Bright.

“I knew it was going to be tough when they took those lapped cars out. That’s the rule and, I know when I’m running second, I’m excited when they take the lapped cars out because it gives you a fresh chance at the leader. Luckily, we were good enough tonight to where we didn’t have to battle anybody there at the end. It made my job a little bit easier.”

The win snapped Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports’ seemingly unrelenting grasp on the USAC Indiana Midget Week series in which his drivers had won seven feature events in a row dating to 2015 coming into Tuesday night’s event. The name Clauson has its fingerprints on the bookends surrounding KKM’s IMW winning streak. Bryan Clauson raced to victory in the last event prior to the KKM’s lengthy succession of wins, while Tuesday’s was captured by a car fielded by Bryan’s father, Tim Clauson.

The Clauson Marshall Racing team has already proven themselves to be a formidable foe to challenge Kunz/Curb Agajanian’s reign of supremacy in its first full-year of existence, with Justin Grant also nabbing a win in the season opener at the Southern Illinois Center in Du Quoin.

“I think we’re definitely on our way,” Courtney believes. “With that said, Keith has one heck of a lineup. They’ve definitely proven what they’ve got. Our goal this year was to come in and make them get up on their heels. I feel like we’ve got them a little bit against the ropes right now, but I know they’re going to dig deep and they’re going to come back at us just like we’re going at them right now. It’s going to be fun. It’s not easy to win these races and you have to take advantage of them every chance you get. You can never take them for granted. That’s what we love about racing and competition. I have a

ton of respect for Pete and Keith and all those guys over there. They've got a hell of a group over there racing against us. It's going to be tough, but this is why we race. This is why we do what we do."

Auckland, New Zealand's Michael Pickens returned to the USAC Indiana Midget Week tour for the first time since 2014, taking second-place honors in his Brett & Leigh Morris/Seamount Racing – Tony Elliott Foundation/King/GRD Toyota.

Kyle Larson used a rare day off between Monster Energy NASCAR Cup duties to play in the dirt where he made a late-race charge to run third in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/Walker Filtration – TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: June 6, 2017 – Montpelier Motor Speedway – Montpelier, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Kyle Larson, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.965; 2. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-14.102; 3. Michael Pickens, 1NZ, Seamount-14.346; 4. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-14.386; 5. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-14.419; 6. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-14.429; 7. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.456; 8. Zach Daum, 5D, Daum-14.466; 9. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-14.578; 10. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.586; 11. Rico Abreu, 97K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.591; 12. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.622; 13. Trey Marcham, 32, Marcham-14.625; 14. Steve Buckwalter, 25B, Buckwalter-14.679; 15. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-14.690; 16. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-14.718; 17. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-14.769; 18. Chris Windom, 5, Baldwin-14.886; 19. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-14.922; 20. Tony DiMattia, 50, TDM-14.947; 21. Davey Ray, 33, RayPro-14.949; 22. Ronnie Gardner, 25x, Rodela-14.965; 23. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.997; 24. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-15.009; 25. Justin Peck, 7K, Irwin-15.013; 26. Kyle Jones, 04, Hefler-15.053; 27. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-15.084; 28. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-15.093; 29. Chris Baue, 2, Baue-15.240; 30. Jimi Quin, 8GQ, Quin-15.256; 31. Michael Koontz, 17K, Koontz-15.323; 32. Kade Morton, 8m, Morton-15.436; 33. Brad Kraus, 6B, Kraus-15.445; 34. Justin Dickerson, 21D, Dickerson-15.514; 35. Chance Morton, 7MF, Morton-15.538; 36. Jake Neuman, 3N, Neuman-15.608; 37. Ryan Secrest, 17o, Koontz-15.753; 38. Courtney Crone, 25c, Rodela-15.770; 39. Tylar Rankin, 95, Rankin-16.236; 40. Gage Walker, 47, Mason-NT; 41. Tyler Nelson, 88, Nelson-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Kyle Larson, 3. Alex Bright, 4. Justin Peck, 5. Tyler Thomas, 6. Davey Ray, 7. Brad Kraus, 8. Ryan Secrest, 9. Trey Marcham, 10. Chris Baue. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tanner Thorson, 2. Tyler Courtney, 3. Ronnie Gardner, 4. Chris Windom, 5. Steve Buckwalter, 6. Ryan Greth, 7. Courtney Crone, 8. Jimi Quin, 9. Chase Jones, 10. Justin Dickerson. NT

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tanner Carrick, 2. Michael Pickens, 3. Justin Grant, 4. Chad Boat, 5. Rico Abreu, 6. Chance Morton, 7. Ryan Robinson, 8. Brayton Lynch, 9. Michael Koontz, 10. Tylar Rankin. NT

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Zach Daum, 3. Jerry Coons Jr., 4. Brady Bacon, 5. Holly Shelton, 6. Dave Darland, 7. Jake Neuman, 8. Tony DiMattia, 9. Kade Morton. 2:55.38

C-MAIN: (10 laps) 1. Chance Morton, 2. Jake Neuman, 3. Courtney Crone, 4. Justin Dickerson, 5. Brad Kraus, 6. Ryan Secrest. NT

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Tyler Thomas, 2. Ryan Robinson, 3. Rico Abreu, 4. Davey Ray, 5. Dave Darland, 6. Holly Shelton, 7. Steve Buckwalter, 8. Chance Morton, 9. Chase Jones, 10. Michael Koontz, 11. Courtney Crone, 12. Justin Dickerson, 13. Jake Neuman, 14. Chris Baue, 15. Ryan Greth, 16. Tony DiMattia, 17. Jimi Quin, 18. Brayton Lynch. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Michael Pickens, 3. Kyle Larson, 4. Brady Bacon, 5. Alex Bright, 6. Shane Golobic, 7. Justin Grant, 8. Tanner Thorson, 9. Ryan Robinson, 10. Spencer Bayston, 11. Chad Boat, 12. Tanner Carrick, 13. Davey Ray, 14. Rico Abreu, 15. Chris Windom, 16. Justin Peck, 17. Zach Daum, 18. Dave Darland, 19. Holly Shelton, 20. Ronnie Gardner, 21. Jerry Coons Jr., 22. Jake Neuman, 23. Tyler Thomas. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-4 Alex Bright, Laps 5-30 Tyler Courtney.

****Jimi Quin flipped during the semi.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Brady Bacon-285, 2-Spencer Bayston-237, 3-Tanner Thorson-232, 4-Justin Grant-226, 5-Shane Golobic-214, 6-Jerry Coons Jr.-198, 7-Tyler Courtney-195, 8-Ryan Robinson-162, 9-Alex Bright-157, 10-Chad Boat-153.

USAC INDIANA MIDGET WEEK POINTS: 1-Tyler Courtney-82, 2-Michael Pickens-78, 3-Kyle Larson-77, 4-Brady Bacon-69, 5-Alex Bright-64, 6-Shane Golobic-63, 7-Justin Grant-58, 8-Tanner Thorson-57, 9-Spencer Bayston-51, 10-Ryan Robinson-49.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: June 7, 2017 – Gas City I-69 Speedway – Gas City, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Kyle Larson (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Shane Golobic (Simpson Race Products First Heat Winner)

Tanner Thorson (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. Second Heat Winner)

Tanner Carrick (Chalk Stix Third Heat Winner)

Spencer Bayston (Indy Race Parts Fourth Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Shane Golobic (14th-6th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH-PLACE FINISHER: Davey Ray

PROSOURCE HARD WORK AWARD: Jerry Coons Jr.

=====

Kiwi Slices to Victory at USAC Indiana Midget Week; Pickens Takes Round 2 at Gas City

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Gas City, Indiana.....When Michael Pickens rounded turn four and powered off the final corner to claim victory in Wednesday night's USAC Indiana Midget Week round, USAC flagman Tom Hansing's checkers were not the only set of silks waving at Gas City I-69 Speedway.

A large swath of Pickens' fellow countrymen, fans, followers and supporters from his homeland of New Zealand were on hand, cheering and waving their country's flag high and proud as Pickens crossed the finish line first, delivering a gift to all those who helped support him monetarily on this successful endeavor to the U.S., many of which have their name printed on the side of his Brett & Leigh Morris/Seamount Racing – Tony Elliott Foundation/King/GRD Toyota.

“It’s wicked, man,” Pickens said with a grin. “There’s 350-plus people who’ve contributed to this campaign that we’re doing. Plus, our major sponsors. We couldn’t do this without every single one of them. To get them a win is pretty special. We asked for a lot and they gave it to us. Lucky enough, we’ve been able to deliver. It’s nice for us to say ‘hey, here’s a win for your support.’ That’s pretty special.”

Pickens would start from the 11th position after missing the heat transfer, winning the B-Main then being assessed a two row penalty for being late to grid for the start of the main event.

For the second-straight night, USAC/ARDC Midget point leader Alex Bright would lead the field to the green from his pole starting position. Bright would surge ahead for much of the first circuit before reigning USAC Midget National Champion Tanner Thorson spurted ahead on the outside of turn four to beat Bright to the line by an inch before scooting away for control in the early stages of the 30-lapper.

Shortly after clearing Bright for the second position using the inside line on the fourth lap, season-opener winner Justin Grant found trouble in turn one as he bopped and bounced his way trampoline-style multiple times before coming to a rest sideways in turn one. He would restart from the tail.

On the second attempted lap four restart, Rico Abreu began his power surge as he ducked underneath Bright for second on the bottom of turn three. Bright countered to no avail as Abreu hustled to turn one first, then set course on running down his Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian teammate and leader, Thorson.

On the seventh lap, Abreu was in striking position and used a run entering turn three on the bottom before sliding up off the fourth corner to clear Thorson for the spot and the race lead less than 10 laps in.

The top-two of Abreu and Thorson began to distance themselves from the rest of the pack just before midway as Bright was encircled in a maddening scramble for third that included Kyle Larson, Brady Bacon and Michael Pickens among others in a see-saw thunderdome-style battle in which a brief moment of sanity was near impossible to find. Larson was the first to emerge from the fray as he first zipped past Bacon for fourth on the 13th lap and by Bright two laps later for third.

Bright came right back at Larson’s jugular to momentarily reclaim the lead, but as he slipped up between turns one and two at the midway point, Larson took ownership of third with Pickens tucked immediately behind as Bright got shuffled out of the deck and into the seventh position.

The unoccupied land between the top-two of Abreu, Thorson and the third and fourth-place cars of Larson and Pickens to melt away. Shortly after Chance Morton walked away from a turn one tumble on lap 19, the race for second became a three-way scrum involving new leader Thorson with a slight edge in the middle over Abreu nosing along on the bottom and Larson making moves up top.

With ten to go, Larson continued to inch nearer to the front, but on lap 21, his wizardry came to a halt after losing control on the cushion of turns three and four, sending him sideways into a stall from which he would not escape.

That created a window of opportunity for those lurking to make their presence known down the stretch, including new fourth-place occupant Michael Pickens who made a nifty, daring move by splitting the second and third-place cars of Abreu and Brady Bacon off turn two on the restart.

Shortly thereafter, previous night’s Montpelier winner and fourth-place runner Tyler Courtney fell to the wayside on the 22nd lap to bring out the final yellow.

Thorson and Pickens stuck together on the final restart with eight to go. When Thorson’s ride slipped high off the bottom at the exit of turn four on lap 24, Pickens made his initial bid for the lead. Thorson saw it coming and reacted with a defensive line of his own coming off of four that put Pickens in the role of a lawn edger as he came near and dear to trimming the outer edges of the infield grass blades along the front straightaway.

Pickens proceeded to fall in line behind Thorson for the moment as he regrouped to make another run. Bacon briefly nosed underneath to challenge Pickens in turn two moments later with no luck. One lap later with four to go, the lead was all Pickens after Thorson left just enough space for Pickens to squeeze by underneath off of two.

From there, Pickens put this one on ice as he ran away from the field in the final handful of laps to record his third career USAC National Midget victory and his second USAC Indiana Midget Week triumph, a 1.6 second win over Bacon, Thorson, Abreu and Spencer Bayston.

After a rough go of it early on in the evening, the new USAC Indiana Midget Week point leader was full of discontent. The 34- year-old harnessed that energy in a positive direction as he translated the force of his frustration to his right foot.

"I was pretty angry after having to start 11th," Pickens admits. "We should've started at least third tonight, but we didn't transfer through our heat and had to run the B. We were going to start seventh, but then we were late getting out for the feature, so that meant we had to start two rows further back. I was elbows up from the get-go. Our car just got better and better. I think, on the last lap, our car was probably the best. Our car was absolutely spot-on."

When it comes to the types of racetracks and the competition involved with USAC Indiana Midget Week, Pickens indicated there's no comparison.

"It's totally different," Pickens explains. "We have flat quarter-miles back home, so the size is similar, but the shapes are totally different. The way you race these guys as hard as you have to race them is different too. You can roll around back home and push to 80 to 90 percent and get a win. Here, you're 100% every single lap of the race. No one gives you a single inch. It takes everything you've got to get every little bit out of the car, and we were able to do that tonight."

"To be honest, it's a privilege to be able to run against these guys, let alone beat them," Pickens praises. "When we come over here, I set the bar pretty high. I tell the boys if we can run top-five every night and get a couple of wins, that would be mega. So far, we're hitting those marks. To get the win tonight is an absolute dream come true."

Brady Bacon stole second from fellow two-time USAC National Champion Abreu at the line with an outside pass on the final lap in his FMR Racing/Brown & Miller Racing Solutions – Black Watch Farms/Beast/Toyota.

Meanwhile, St. Helena, California's Rico Abreu led the most laps (13) but fell back to third at the finish in his Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/Abreu Vineyards - IWX/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: June 7, 2017 – Gas City I-69 Speedway – Gas City, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Kyle Larson, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.386; 2. Rico Abreu, 97K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.484; 3. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-12.532; 4. Michael Pickens, 1NZ, Seamount-12.535; 5. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-12.617; 6. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-12.642; 7. Brent Beauchamp, 11B, B & B-12.654; 8. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.672; 9. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-12.681; 10. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.694; 11. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-12.734; 12. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-12.752; 13. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.754; 14. Zach Daum, 5D, Daum-12.783; 15. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.786; 16. Trey Marcham, 32, Marcham-12.797; 17. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-12.844; 18. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-12.867; 19. Courtney Crone, 25c, Rodela-12.888; 20. Ronnie Gardner, 25x, Rodela-12.933; 21. Brenden Bright, 92, Bright-12.938; 22. Tony DiMattia, 50, TDM-12.969; 23. Chris Windom, 5, Baldwin-12.973; 24. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.977; 25. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-12.980; 26. Michael Koontz, 17K, Koontz-13.000; 27. Justin Peck, 7K, Irwin-13.015; 28. Jake Neuman, 3N, Neuman-13.109; 29. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-13.128; 30. Ryan Secrest, 17o, Koontz-13.157; 31. Gage Walker, 7, Walker-13.196; 32. Steve Buckwalter, 25B, Buckwalter-13.261; 33. Brad Kraus, 6B, Kraus-

13.306; 34. Kade Morton, 8m, Morton-13.401; 35. Noah Key, 14K, Key-13.435; 36. Andrew Felker, 37, Felker-13.789; 37. Tylar Rankin, 95, Rankin-15.597; 38. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-NT; 39. Chance Morton, 7MF, Morton-NT; 40. Chris Baue, 2, Baue-NT (time of 13.332 disallowed); 41. Kyle Jones, 04, Hefler-NT (time of 13.342 disallowed).

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Chad Boat, 2. Brenden Bright, 3. Kyle Larson, 4. Tanner Carrick, 5. Tyler Thomas, 6. Dave Darland, 7. Jerry Coons Jr., 8. Chase Jones, 9. Ryan Greth, 10. Brad Kraus. 2:08.25

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Rico Abreu, 3. Zach Daum, 4. Justin Grant, 5. Ryan Robinson, 6. Tony DiMattia, 7. Kade Morton, 8. Brayton Lynch, 9. Ryan Secrest, 10. Michael Koontz. 2:08.26

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Alex Bright, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Courtney Crone, 4. Brady Bacon, 5. Chris Windom, 6. Brent Beauchamp, 7. Justin Peck, 8. Gage Walker, 9. Noah Key, 10. Chance Morton. 2:10.85

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Holly Shelton, 2. Ronnie Gardner, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Tanner Thorson, 5. Michael Pickens, 6. Steve Buckwalter, 7. Jake Neuman, 8. Trey Marcham, 9. Chris Baue, 10. Andrew Felker. NT

C-MAIN: (10 laps) 1. Chance Morton, 2. Steve Buckwalter, 3. Gage Walker, 4. Chris Baue, 5. Chase Jones, 6. Kade Morton, 7. Brayton Lynch, 8. Noah Key, 9. Brad Kraus, 10. Andrew Felker, 11. Tylar Rankin. NT

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Michael Pickens, 2. Tyler Thomas, 3. Brent Beauchamp, 4. Jerry Coons Jr., 5. Chance Morton, 6. Ryan Robinson, 7. Steve Buckwalter, 8. Justin Peck, 9. Trey Marcham, 10. Gage Walker, 11. Jake Neuman, 12. Tony DiMattia, 13. Dave Darland, 14. Chris Baue, 15. Ryan Greth, 16. Ryan Secrest. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Michael Pickens, 2. Brady Bacon, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Rico Abreu, 5. Spencer Bayston, 6. Tyler Thomas, 7. Brent Beauchamp, 8. Shane Golobic, 9. Ronnie Gardner, 10. Tanner Carrick, 11. Alex Bright, 12. Chad Boat, 13. Holly Shelton, 14. Brenden Bright, 15. Justin Grant, 16. Gage Walker, 17. Jerry Coons Jr., 18. Kyle Larson, 19. Ryan Robinson, 20. Zach Daum, 21. Courtney Crone, 22. Jake Neuman, 23. Tyler Courtney, 24. Chance Morton. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-6 Tanner Thorson, Laps 7-19 Rico Abreu, Laps 20-25 Tanner Thorson, Laps 26-30 Michael Pickens.

****Andrew Felker flipped during qualifying. Brad Kraus flipped during the C-Main. Ryan Greth flipped during the semi. Chance Morton flipped on lap 19 of the feature.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Brady Bacon-361, 2-Spencer Bayston-302, 3-Tanner Thorson-301, 4-Shane Golobic-271, 5-Justin Grant-265, 6-Jerry Coons Jr.-228, 7-Tyler Courtney-224, 8-Alex Bright-206, 9-Chad Boat-200, 10-Tyler Thomas-199.

USAC INDIANA MIDGET WEEK POINTS: 1-Michael Pickens-155, 2-Brady Bacon-145, 3-Tanner Thorson-126, 4-Shane Golobic-120, 5-Kyle Larson-116, 6-Spencer Bayston-116, 7-Alex Bright-113, 8-Tyler Courtney-111, 9-Rico Abreu-110, 10-Justin Grant-97.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: June 8, 2017 – Lincoln Park Speedway – Putnamville, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Kyle Larson (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Chad Boat (Simpson Race Products First Heat Winner)

Shane Golobic (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. Second Heat Winner)

Alex Bright (Chalk Stix Third Heat Winner)

Holly Shelton (Indy Race Parts Fourth Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Ronnie Gardner (22nd to 9th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH-PLACE FINISHER: Holly Shelton

PROSOURCE HARD WORK AWARD: Chance Morton

=====

Pickens Doubles Down at Putnamville for 2nd Straight USAC Indiana Midget Week Victory

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Putnamville, Indiana.....A standing ovation is reserved for a performance that transcends the ordinary.

What is considered the common or run-of-the-mill may be admirable, but when an individual witnesses one of those handful of instances when the stars align to create a lasting image that will be ingrained in memory, the event is elevated to a status above the norm.

Michael Pickens performance in the final laps of Thursday's USAC Indiana Midget Week round at Lincoln Park Speedway was certainly not ordinary and the audience responded in kind by rising to their feet and applauding the New Zealand driver who captivated them in a mesmerizing five-lap sequence.

One night after bringing a healthy contingent of supporters from his homeland to their feet with a victory at Gas City, Pickens directed an academy award winning performance. In true dramatic fashion, Pickens kept the large crowd in suspense as he saved his best performance for the final act, swapping the race lead back-and-forth between he and Spencer Bayston in a dramatic finish that's fate wasn't decided until the final corner.

Pickens' victory brought race fans to a fever pitch as the veteran driver finally begins to receive his due as one of the top drivers in the sport of midget racing and an international racing star with his electric stage act that has the U.S. midget racing scene abuzz.

Pickens' night began in a completely different light after pulling off in the first hot laps session without taking a single lap at speed. Apparently, two laps were all that were necessary as the 34-year-old from Auckland set ProSource Fast Qualifying time in his Brett & Leigh Morris/Seamount Racing – Tony Elliott Foundation/King/GRD Toyota.

Funny enough, after being docked two rows in Wednesday night's feature at Gas City for arriving late to pre-race staging, Pickens was the first car to hit the track Thursday at Lincoln Park, making sure that he wouldn't have to make his job any more difficult than it already was.

Pickens would start six, but for the third consecutive night, USAC/ARDC point leader Alex Bright began the feature event from the pole and, as he did in the IMW opener at Montpelier, would jump his way out to the lead on the opening lap.

Back a handful of positions behind Bright was fifth-running Pickens who, on the fifth lap, found himself nearly running into trouble as he got sideways and airborne after elevating all four wheels off the ground. He would gather it up and ride on, but not without losing a position to drop to six.

While much of the field remained on the bottom, Bayston was the top front runner to venture to the outside and pass at will in the first third of the 30-lap event. Sure enough, those dues he paid up top would pay off as he entered the top-three on the eighth lap around the outside of Chad Boat, then swooped to the bottom to swipe Boat's line away on the bottom entry into turn one.

Bayston's crew had replaced the powerplant of the No. 97 prior to the feature event after finishing second in the third heat race. The engine was a songbird as Bayston stuck to his guns to complete the same move on Brent Beauchamp for second into the first turn on lap 11 and, a lap later, the lead would be his own after utilizing another outside pass around Alex Bright.

Immediately, Bayston opened up a substantial gap for the lead until a lap 15 yellow for a Tyler Thomas/Brayton Lynch turn two tangle brought out the yellow at the halfway point. Shortly after the ensuing restart, eighth-running Gage Walker received contact to the rear bumper that sent him sideways at the entrance of turn three, collecting Lynch, as another yellow flag hit the speedway.

Time and again, Bayston was a force on the restarts and, on the lap 17 resumption, the 2015 series Rookie of the Year would jump out to an eight car-length lead over Bright. With 12 to go, the push was on as Bright slid up the track in turn two, allowing Boat to squeeze underneath for second.

Meanwhile, Pickens began to pound the cushion entering turn one with the right rear, then instantly flicked the steering wheel to the left and used the momentum from diamonding down the hill to blast around Bright for third.

Following a caution for the stoppage of reigning Putnamville USAC Indiana Midget Week winner Tanner Thorson and Ronnie Gardner, Pickens continued to hold down his own patented line, entering turn one higher than any man or woman had ventured as he kept tabs on Bayston.

An outside backstretch pass for second around Boat moved Pickens to second on the leaderboard with just eight laps remaining. With anticipation building and senses working overtime, the decreasing gap between the two was increasingly visible as the voices from the crowd began to murmur in excitement about the potential finish as the tension was so evident, you could feel it seeping into your pores.

Pickens had closed to the tail of Bayston with five to go when sixth-running Brent Beauchamp attempted to exit the track after losing power but was not able to get far away enough off the racing surface to set up one final shootout for the win.

The final five laps will be remembered for those in attendance as one of the most exciting midget racing duels in Lincoln Park Speedway's history, immediately bringing to mind Kyle Larson and Bryan Clauson's savage duel in 2011. Yet again, though, Bayston was strong enough on the restart to gap Pickens who stayed true to the top and his diamonding pattern off turns one and three to find any extra ounce of speed he could get like a downhill skier.

On laps 26, 27 and 28, Pickens was able to get a big enough launch from the turn one berm, but the momentum would cease off the exit where Bayston was strong enough to keep Pickens an arm's distance away. Through turns three and four, Bayston took the high road as Pickens followed suit.

Coming to the white flag, Pickens attacked the cushion like a rabid animal, lifting the left side wheels off the ground as he flat-footed the turn three cushion and countered underneath off of four to beat Bayston to the stripe with one to go.

Pickens, who had so spectacularly executed the entry into turn one time-after-time, wasn't so graceful on his final entry as he bounced his way through the corner, getting completely with a half-spin that caused a slight disruption in his rhythm before pointing his car in the right direction as Bayston pulled alongside underneath.

Amazingly, little ground was lost as Pickens regained control and stood on the pedal to pull even with Bayston halfway down the back straight. Both entered the high line in three with Bayston a couple car lengths ahead, but Pickens had his

plan stapled to his mind as he countered below Bayston in a wheel-to-wheel drag race to the line that Pickens prevailed in by a single car length.

It was Pickens fourth-career USAC National Midget victory and his second in as many nights to become the first driver to win consecutive races in a single USAC Indiana Midget Week since Bryan Clauson in 2009! By virtue of finishes of 2nd, 1st and 1st in the first three USAC Indiana Midget Week feature, Pickens now holds a 31-point lead over Brady Bacon at the midway point of the six-race series.

Lebanon, Indiana's Spencer Bayston just narrowly missed his second career USAC win and his second straight year with an USAC Indiana Midget Week victory, coming home second in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/Curb Records - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

Tyler Courtney's crew had to swap out the engine overnight after mechanical trouble sidelined the Montpelier winner the previous night at Gas City. A rough start and a 20th place starting position would not hold back Courtney as he raced to a third-place finish to earn KSE Racing Products Hard Charger of the Race in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Indiana Donor Network/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: June 8, 2017 – Lincoln Park Speedway – Putnamville, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Michael Pickens, 1NZ, Seamount-13.036; 2. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-13.133; 3. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.150; 4. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.159; 5. Rico Abreu, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.218; 6. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-13.227; 7. Steve Buckwalter, 25B, Buckwalter-13.262; 8. Chance Morton, 7MF, Morton-13.322; 9. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-13.349; 10. Brent Beauchamp, 11B, B & B-13.360; 11. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-13.369; 12. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-13.375; 13. Courtney Crone, 25c, Rodela-13.379; 14. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.387; 15. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-13.394; 16. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-13.424; 17. Ronnie Gardner, 25x, Rodela-13.485; 18. Brenden Bright, 92, Bright-13.486; 19. Gage Walker, 7, Walker-13.508; 20. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-13.545; 21. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.546; 22. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-13.566; 23. Michael Koontz, 17K, Koontz-13.574; 24. Zach Daum, 5D, Daum-13.587; 25. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-13.588; 26. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-13.602; 27. Jake Neuman, 3N, Neuman-13.646; 28. Davey Ray, 33, RayPro-13.659; 29. Jimi Quin, 8GQ, Quin-13.702; 30. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.731; 31. Trey Marcham, 32, Marcham-13.946; 32. Kade Morton, 8m, Morton-14.286; 33. Cole Fehr, 15F, Live Loud-14.464; 34. Kyle Jones, 04, Hefler-14.773; 35. Paul Raynes, 7x, Seven-15.095; 36. Andrew Felker, 37, Felker-NT; 37. Tony DiMattia, 50, TDM-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Ronnie Gardner, 2. Rico Abreu, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Michael Pickens, 5. Tyler Courtney, 6. Chad Boat, 7. Jimi Quin, 8. Cole Fehr, 9. Courtney Crone. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tanner Carrick, 2. Brent Beauchamp, 3. Brady Bacon, 4. Ryan Greth, 5. Shane Golobic, 6. Brenden Bright, 7. Holly Shelton, 8. Brayton Lynch, 9. Kyle Jones. NT

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Alex Bright, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Gage Walker, 4. Tyler Thomas, 5. Michael Koontz, 6. Steve Buckwalter, 7. Jake Neuman, 8. Trey Marcham, 9. Paul Raynes. NT

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Zach Daum, 2. Justin Grant, 3. Dave Darland, 4. Jerry Coons Jr., 5. Ryan Robinson, 6. Chance Morton, 7. Kade Morton, 8. Davey Ray. 2:17.52

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Tyler Courtney, 3. Chad Boat, 4. Holly Shelton, 5. Ryan Robinson, 6. Brayton Lynch, 7. Brenden Bright, 8. Jimi Quin, 9. Jake Neuman, 10. Chase Jones, 11. Cole Fehr, 12. Paul Raynes, 13. Michael Koontz, 14. Steve Buckwalter, 15. Trey Marcham, 16. Kade Morton, 17. Chance Morton. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Michael Pickens, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Rico Abreu, 5. Justin Grant, 6. Shane Golobic, 7. Chad Boat, 8. Brady Bacon, 9. Alex Bright, 10. Jerry Coons Jr., 11. Ryan Robinson, 12. Zach Daum, 13. Dave Darland, 14. Holly Shelton, 15. Tyler Thomas, 16. Tanner Carrick, 17. Brayton Lynch, 18. Ronnie Gardner, 19. Brent Beauchamp, 20. Tanner Thorson, 21. Gage Walker, 22. Ryan Greth. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-12 Alex Bright, Laps 13-28 Spencer Bayston, Laps 29-30 Michael Pickens.

****Andrew Felker flipped during qualifying. Courtney Crone flipped during the first heat.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Brady Bacon-421, 2-Spencer Bayston-380, 3-Shane Golobic-331, 4-Justin Grant-330, 5-Tanner Thorson-330, 6-Tyler Courtney-291, 7-Jerry Coons Jr.-276, 8-Alex Bright-260, 9-Chad Boat-254, 10-Tyler Thomas-237.

USAC INDIANA MIDGET WEEK POINTS: 1-Michael Pickens-236, 2-Brady Bacon-205, 3-Spencer Bayston-194, 4-Shane Golobic-180, 5-Tyler Courtney-178, 6-Rico Abreu-178, 7-Alex Bright-167, 8-Justin Grant-162, 9-Tanner Thorson-155, 10-Chad Boat-147.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: June 9, 2017 – Bloomington Speedway – Bloomington, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Michael Pickens (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Ronnie Gardner (Simpson Race Products First Heat Winner)

Tanner Carrick (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. Second Heat Winner)

Alex Bright (Chalk Stix Third Heat Winner)

Zach Daum (Indy Race Parts Fourth Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Tyler Courtney (20th to 3rd)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Dave Darland

PROSOURCE HARD WORK AWARD: Holly Shelton

=====

Sunshine Rises Again; Courtney Takes 2nd USAC Indiana Midget Week Win in Bloomington CMR Sweep

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Bloomington, Indiana.....Tyler Courtney entered USAC Indiana Midget Week with a pocket full of sunshine. After two victories in the first four rounds of the six-race series, the driver known as “Sunshine” left Bloomington Speedway Friday night with a pocket full of cash.

Three nights following his first career USAC Midget National Championship points win in the USAC Indiana Midget Week opener at Montpelier Motor Speedway, Indianapolis, Indiana's Courtney found his way to victory lane once again to lead a Clauson Marshall Racing sweep of the podium in the fastest 30-lap USAC MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP RACE ever held in Bloomington.

After overcoming a less-than-stellar qualifying time at Putnamville's Lincoln Park Speedway one night prior with a hard charging 20th to 3rd feature run, Courtney took care of business in ProSource Qualifying Friday night. After timing in sixth, he was on the outside looking in during his heat, missing a transfer spot and squandering an opportunity to start on the pole for the main event.

The sun still shined through the clouds, though, and Courtney found solace by using the B-Main as a learning opportunity.

"We qualified a lot better tonight, but I put myself in a bad spot in the heat," Courtney acknowledges. But it worked out. I ran the B and learned a lot. Some nights, it does pay off to run the B. Obviously, your goal is to never run the B, but on a night like tonight, it was very beneficial. I was able to move around in the B to figure out where I could go in the feature since I knew I wasn't on the front row like I should've been. It worked to our advantage since I was able to get to the lead and run a line that no one else was using."

Starting seventh, that particular line on the track was a godsend for Courtney as, early on, Jerry Coons Jr. was the locomotive leading a freight train of cars around the infield tires while Rico Abreu made some headway on the high side to third from his 10th starting position in the first five laps.

Further back in the field, Courtney was wavering between the seventh to tenth positions during the first several laps. On lap eight, however, Courtney decided it was time to make a change and the line that had worked so well for him in the B was back in play.

"I saw Rico making some ground up there, and I knew the line that I had run once in the B worked," Courtney remembers. I knew if I didn't go as high as him up in the loose stuff, I could go to the lane above the guys on the bottom. I could just carry speed to get by him off the corner. It's nice when you have a really good car, and you can go where nobody else is. Tim (Clauson) is one hell of a guy behind the wrenches."

Running seventh, Courtney was on the move, picking off the sixth position on lap 10, the fifth spot on lap 12 and to third on lap 13 running all by his lonesome in the middle groove.

USAC Triple Crown champ and 2006-07 National Midget champ Coons remained the leader as he sought his first series win since 2010 with fast qualifier Chad Boat right on his tail on the low line. Meanwhile, Courtney was eating away at the deficit and, by lap 18, was in position to make his move.

Rather than hitting for a couple singles, Courtney smacked a double by passing both Boat for second and Coons for the lead through the middle of turns three and four, beating Coons to the stripe by a half-car length to obtain a lead that he would not relinquish.

In the final 12 laps, Courtney had to wade his way through a sea of backmarkers, which he was able to steer through without any hiccups as his two CMR teammates Justin Grant and Shane Golobic emerged toward the forefront in the final laps.

Courtney led the final baker's dozen to earn his second career USAC National Midget victory in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Indiana Donor Network/Spike/Stanton SR-11 over teammates Grant and Golobic for the first podium sweep by a single team in the series since Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports' one-two-three finish on the final night of the "Gold Crown Midget Nationals" at Tri-City Speedway in Granite City, Illinois last October.

Admittedly, Courtney wasn't exactly beaming with confidence when he awoke Friday morning. Last July, he rode out a massive heat race flip that may very well have cost him a shot at winning the Indiana Sprint Week title. This past April, he managed just a 16th place finish in a USAC AMSOIL National Sprint Car event at the quarter-mile, red clay oval.

Yet, Courtney's team owner, Tim Clauson, is a frequent visitor himself to victory lane at Bloomington, scoring numerous wins with his son Bryan as the driver throughout the years. Tim's leadership played a heavy role as a guiding force that provided Courtney the confidence, and the car, to clear the mental hurdle that had stood in his way for so long.

"Honestly, I wasn't very excited coming into today," admitted Courtney. "I've never been comfortable around here, especially since I've torn up two racecars on the same part of the racetrack. It makes it tough to get yourself past that hurdle in (turns) one and two. But tonight, was just our night. Tim obviously has a really good car around here and I was able to build my confidence throughout the night. Everybody had the same racetrack, and we were at a little bit more an advantage as everybody else tonight."

"Sweeping the top-three shows our team is going to be a force to reckon with," Courtney continued. "Keith (Kunz) is at the top right now, but we're working on taking them down. It's not going to be easy because Keith has been around a long time. He's got a very talented group of drivers over there. They're going to come back; they're going to figure something out, I know it. We just have to stay on our game; we can't let them catch up and leave us behind. We just need to keep this momentum rolling throughout the week and throughout the rest of the year."

Lone, California's Justin Grant took second in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Priority Aviation/Spike/Stanton SR-11 and is the lone driver to finish in the top-five of both April's Bloomington USAC Sprint Car and Friday's USAC National Midget features.

"Sunshine seemed to pick through the field a little quicker than I did," Grant explains. "He was running a little higher up and where those guys weren't. All three of these CMR cars are so good, once he got a little separation, it was hard for me to gain any ground back. I knew he wasn't going to make any mistakes and his racecar is just as fast as mine."

Shane Golobic of Fremont, California raced under trying circumstances. Earlier Friday, he was in the emergency room receiving fluids to remain hydrated due after suffering from flu-like symptoms. The team even had Chris Windom on standby just in case Golobic couldn't go. Golobic drove a determined race to finish third in his Clauson Marshall-Matt Wood Racing/Elk Grove Ford – Driven 2 Save Lives/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: June 9, 2017 – Bloomington Speedway – Bloomington, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-11.764; 2. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-11.767; 3. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-11.865; 4. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-11.897; 5. Michael Pickens, 1NZ, Seamount-11.920; 6. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-11.936; 7. Zach Daum, 5D, Daum-11.965; 8. Tyler Nelson, 88, Nelson-12.017; 9. Rico Abreu, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.019; 10. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-12.041; 11. Ronnie Gardner, 25x, Rodela-12.066; 12. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-12.110; 13. Gage Walker, 7, Walker-12.196; 14. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.223; 15. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.224; 16. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.255; 17. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.284; 18. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-12.333; 19. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-12.338; 20. Davey Ray, 33, RayPro-12.372; 21. Trey Marcham, 32, Marcham-12.391; 22. Cole Fehr, 15F, Live Loud-12.442; 23. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.482; 24. Kade Morton, 8m, Morton-12.508; 25. Chance Morton, 7MF, Morton-12.510; 26. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-12.543; 27. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-12.559; 28. Kyle Jones, 04, Hefler-12.590; 29. Adam Pierson, 76E, Mancini-12.720; 30. Michael Koontz, 17K, Koontz-12.731; 31. Justin Dickerson, 21D,

Dickerson-12.894; 32. Dan Biner, 7x, Seven-13.041; 33. Brent Beauchamp, 11B, B & B-NT; 34. Brenden Bright, 92, Bright-NT; 35. Ryan Secrest, 8, Morton-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Chad Boat, 3. Michael Pickens, 4. Gage Walker, 5. Trey Marcham, 6. Adam Pierson, 7. Chance Morton, 8. Brent Beauchamp. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Jerry Coons Jr., 2. Brady Bacon, 3. Alex Bright, 4. Tanner Thorson, 5. Tyler Courtney, 6. Cole Fehr, 7. Ryan Greth, 8. Michael Koontz. NT

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tanner Carrick, 2. Holly Shelton, 3. Justin Grant, 4. Dave Darland, 5. Zach Daum, 6. Brayton Lynch, 7. Ronnie Gardner, 8. Justin Dickerson. 2:09.59

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Tyler Thomas, 3. Ryan Robinson, 4. Davey Ray, 5. Chase Jones, 6. Kade Morton, 7. Tyler Nelson, 8. Dan Biner. NT

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Rico Abreu, 3. Zach Daum, 4. Ronnie Gardner, 5. Tyler Nelson, 6. Trey Marcham, 7. Chance Morton, 8. Brayton Lynch, 9. Brent Beauchamp, 10. Ryan Greth, 11. Kade Morton, 12. Justin Dickerson, 13. Chase Jones, 14. Dan Biner, 15. Cole Fehr, 16. Adam Pierson. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Justin Grant, 3. Shane Golobic, 4. Jerry Coons Jr., 5. Chad Boat, 6. Brady Bacon, 7. Gage Walker, 8. Rico Abreu, 9. Michael Pickens, 10. Zach Daum, 11. Holly Shelton, 12. Tyler Thomas, 13. Ronnie Gardner, 14. Ryan Robinson, 15. Tanner Thorson, 16. Spencer Bayston, 17. Dave Darland, 18. Trey Marcham, 19. Tanner Carrick, 20. Alex Bright, 21. Tyler Nelson, 22. Davey Ray. 6:57.95 (New Track Record)

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-17 Jerry Coons Jr., Laps 18-30 Tyler Courtney.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Brady Bacon-488, 2-Spencer Bayston-419, 3-Justin Grant-407, 4-Shane Golobic-406, 5-Tanner Thorson-368, 6-Tyler Courtney-366, 7-Jerry Coons Jr.-345, 8-Chad Boat-325, 9-Michael Pickens-290, 10-Alex Bright-289.

USAC INDIANA MIDGET WEEK POINTS: 1-Michael Pickens-290, 2-Brady Bacon-272, 3-Shane Golobic-255, 4-Tyler Courtney-253, 5-Justin Grant-239, 6-Spencer Bayston-233, 7-Rico Abreu-232, 8-Chad Boat-218, 9-Alex Bright-196, 10-Tanner Thorson-193.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: June 10, 2017 – Lawrenceburg Speedway – Lawrenceburg, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Chad Boat (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Spencer Bayston (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Jerry Coons Jr. (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Tanner Carrick (Chalk Stix 3rd Heat Winner)

Shane Golobic (Indy Race Parts 4th Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Tyler Courtney (7th to 1st)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Ronnie Gardner

PROSOURCE HARD WORK AWARD: Tanner Carrick

=====

Rico Reign in Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Sweep at The Burg

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Lawrenceburg, Indiana.....When you drive for Keith Kunz, you're expected to win. No excuses.

Time and time again, the Columbus, Indiana-based team has provided the machinery that has led to 89 career feature victories and eight championships as a USAC Midget National Championship car entrant. However, throughout the series' first eight events, the venerable team had yet to find victory lane and seemed to be reeling after only one of its five drivers was able to scrape into the top-10 the night prior at Bloomington.

It had been eight years since a Keith Kunz-led team had gone winless this far into the season, but Saturday night at Lawrenceburg Speedway was the night Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports had finally arrived in 2017, and in a big way, as the trio of Rico Abreu, Tanner Thorson and Holly Shelton duplicated Clauson Marshall Racing's feat from the night before by recording a 1-2-3 to sweep of the top-three spots.

After an unforgettable, dare-devilish race-long battle that saw slide-job after slide-job thrown at Shelton by two of her teammates – Abreu and Spencer Bayston – Abreu was finally able to prevail with three laps remaining to earn his 16th career USAC National Midget win and third straight at Lawrenceburg in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/Walker Filtration – TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

"This week has had a lot of ups and downs, but this is when it all pays off," said a thrilled Abreu. "We were getting dicey up front and I didn't know how I was going to get past them since it was so easy to do a crossover. Once I got my momentum going, I made sure I kept my tires spinning every time I hit the cushion just to help not bog down the engine. These motors are the best in the business. It's a lot of fun to drive these cars when they're on point and tonight, we capitalized on that. We didn't qualify great, though, because I changed up my line in qualifying and that hurt us. I enjoy every moment racing with Keith Kunz and Pete Willoughby. They've been doing it for a long time. It makes it a lot of fun when we get up here and win."

All five of the Kunz/Curb-Agajanian cars occupied the first five rows of Saturday's feature starting lineup, including both spots on the front row with Ryan Robinson on the pole and Holly Shelton outside.

The transcendent story of the night from lap one was Shelton, who rode the cushion through turns one and two, then split between the cars of Justin Grant and Ryan Robinson off turn two to take the lead on the opening lap.

Action stalled at the conclusion of lap one as USAC Indiana Midget Week point leader Michael Pickens got sideways at the top of turn one while battling Rico Abreu for the ninth position. As Pickens sat idle in the middle of the track, Alex Bright, Jerry Coons Jr. and Adam Pierson plowed into the fracas, ending the night for all four drivers and throwing a monkey wrench into Pickens' quest for a first USAC Indiana Midget Week title.

On lap nine, Bayston began his trail to the front as he slid Justin Grant for second entering the first turn. Grant hit the cushion, sending him sideways into a half-spin through the second turn before regaining control. However, Bayston had secured the spot and began making strides toward the direction of race leader Shelton.

With Pickens out of the night's picture, USAC National Midget point leader Brady Bacon was poised to put his stamp on overtaking the Kiwi for the IMW lead. However, misfortune would befall Bacon on the 11th lap when he slowed to a halt to bring out a yellow. He would finish 16th.

Bayston took a run at the lead on the ensuing restart with a turn one slider across the nose of Shelton, but Shelton countered underneath, crossing over to maintain her race lead.

Meanwhile, the Kunz/Curb-Agajanian car that started furthest back in the pack, driven by Abreu, had subsequently advanced his way from tenth to fifth prior to the yellow. On the 13th lap, Abreu poked his nose to the outside on the front straight before tearing between the two Clauson Marshall cars of Tyler Courtney and Grant at the entry of one to take third.

Shelton and Bayston remained the main players of the contest further ahead. Bayston was relentless, refusing to stay content and ride around on a rail behind Shelton. The second half of the 30-lapper began with Bayston throwing another jab at Shelton in one as he slid up to take away Shelton's line on the brim. Shelton appeared unfazed and unafraid to keep her foot on the gas as she escaped from Bayston around the outside by the width of a strand of hair off turn two to stay atop the pylon.

The duel at the front allowed Abreu to rapidly join in on the high-speed team meeting between Shelton and Bayston. Bayston tried with all his might, but time-after-time, the second verse was the same as the first on both ends of the racetrack as Bayston's repeated sliders came up empty handed, and Shelton calmly steered back under to take the lead right back.

On the 22nd lap, Bayston finally found enough speed off the fourth corner to nip Shelton by mere inches at the line. Immediately, the two entered turn one side-by-side, yet both simultaneously met in the middle. Both Shelton and Bayston collided, sending each gliding backward toward the outside wall. Somehow, someway, both miraculously found a way to avoid the concrete and a major catastrophe as Rico got on the binders to avoid T-Boning Bayston atop the cushion. Shelton began to distance herself once again, but, unfortunately for Bayston, the smacking of wheels between him and Shelton resulted in a flat left rear tire for which he would have to replace and rejoin the field, albeit out of contention for the win.

"I got a pretty poor restart," Shelton recalls. "I saw Spencer slide me and we crossed each other over a few times. Heading into one, we were both going to run the slider line and, unfortunately, I think my right rear tagged him a little bit. I guess he hopped over the cushion. I felt bad about it. I hate hitting anybody, let alone my teammate."

With the absence of Bayston, Abreu aptly succeeded in the role of aggressor. On lap 25, Shelton tripped over the turn two cushion, allowing Abreu to get a fantastic run on the back straight into three, but Shelton once again was a stone cold assassin as she snared the lead back once again with five to go.

The tension was pulsating from underneath the covered grandstand as the raucous crowd was on needles and pins with the realization that they could be a witness to racing history and the first ever female USAC National feature winner.

Excitement was palpable as the throng of fans stood and pumped their fists, the roar reverberated off the metal roof and the showdown between the relative newcomer and the confident veteran came down to the quick.

Rico's daring attempt on Shelton with three to go was the golden ticket. It repeatedly appeared that the slider could not stick with Shelton so consistently strong, but Rico stuck to his guns and the move paid off once and for all. Shelton tried to counter but was only able to muster enough speed off two to pull even alongside Rico on the back straight. Rico carried the torch to the lead into turn three as Thorson outgunned Shelton for second on the white flag lap with a counter-steer of his own off turn two.

For the final two circuits, Rico was scot-free – and Shelton-free, as he extended a tradition of his own as a Lawrenceburg USAC Midget winner for the third time in his last three tries over Thorson, Shelton, Shane Golobic and Tyler Courtney.

Over the years, Abreu has become a certified master of the slide job. The Lawrenceburg surface fits his fearless style like a glove but knowing when and exactly how to go for the slider is an art form that requires impeccable timing and maintaining a balance of aggressiveness and finesse that keeps one on the edge without going over.

“The bottom was too slow to roll by,” Abreu explained. “When you’re running that close to other cars and the leader’s there, it’s easy to make mistakes on the cushion when you don’t have anything to compare it to besides the speed of the car in front of you. I love doing slide jobs and running the high side like that. It’s all timing. You don’t want to be too short on them or shoot too far past the cushion. I just made sure my wheels were spinning every time I got to the cushion. I finally got clear enough of Holly to where I could slide myself in three and four and just break her momentum.”

After humble beginnings to his night, defending USAC National Midget champion Tanner Thorson of Minden, Nevada, scored his best finish of USAC Indiana Midget Week Saturday night at Lawrenceburg with a second-place run, sandwiched between his two teammates in the Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

“I was kind of sluggish on the start, but we got really good there at the end,” Thorson said. “KKM is back. Any car owner that runs top three in one night is going to be pretty happy. The crew has been working really hard to get us better and better and tonight it showed.”

Holly Shelton nearly pulled off one of the major milestones in USAC history that has yet to be checked off: a female USAC National feature winner. Holly Shelton, of Sacramento, CA, took a career-best third in her Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/Black & Decker - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota, joining Sarah McCune and Stephanie Mockler as the third female driver to record multiple top-five finishes in a USAC National Midget event. Shelton finished 5th at Eldora in September of 2016.

Victory lane was a reunion of sorts for the top-three finishers in Saturday night’s feature. Holly Shelton, Thorson and Abreu grew up throwing sliders on each other in Outlaw Kart competition at Cycleland Speedway in Oroville, California.

Shelton shared that there wasn’t any specific meeting to get the crew’s and drivers’ attention after a disappointing start to the season by Keith Kunz standards. The team responded by example, and the results indicate that fact with all six of the team’s entries finishing within the top-11.

“We stepped up,” Shelton said as matter of fact. “Every time we’re out there, the crew gives us amazing cars. it’s the driver’s job to drive them. After last night, we knew we needed a good night.”

Michael Pickens maintains a lead of the slimmest of margins heading into Sunday’s finale at Kokomo Speedway. He leads Shane Golobic by one and Tyler Courtney by three as the top-five are separated by a mere 12 points. Nine drivers remain mathematically eligible to win USAC Indiana Midget Week: Pickens, Golobic, Courtney, Brady Bacon, Rico Abreu, Justin Grant, Spencer Bayston, Tanner Thorson and Chad Boat.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: June 10, 2017 – Lawrenceburg Speedway – Lawrenceburg, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.588; 2. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.629; 3. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-14.664; 4. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-14.692; 5. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.698; 6. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.814; 7. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.820; 8. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-14.857; 9. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-15.006; 10. Rico Abreu, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-15.038; 11. Ronnie Gardner, 25x, Rodela-15.041; 12. Michael Pickens, 1NZ, Seamount-15.096; 13. Steve Buckwalter, 9p, Ronk-15.157; 14. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-15.164; 15. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-15.215; 16.

Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-15.253; 17. Trey Marcham, 32, Marcham-15.284; 18. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-15.411; 19. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-15.420; 20. Adam Pierson, 76E, Mancini-15.544; 21. Kyle Jones, 04, Hefler-15.720; 22. Chance Morton, 7MF, Morton-15.813; 23. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-15.835; 24. Kade Morton, 8m, Morton-16.087, 25. Robert Bell, 71½, Bell-NT; 26. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-NT (time of 15.122 disallowed).

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Rico Abreu, 2. Justin Grant, 3. Ryan Robinson, 4. Shane Golobic, 5. Chad Boat, 6. Ryan Greth, 7. Chance Morton, 8. Steve Buckwalter, 9. Tanner Carrick. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Dave Darland, 3. Spencer Bayston, 4. Ronnie Gardner, 5. Tanner Thorson, 6. Trey Marcham, 7. Alex Bright, 8. Adam Pierson, 9. Robert Bell. 1:59.95

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Jerry Coons Jr., 2. Michael Pickens, 3. Brady Bacon, 4. Tyler Thomas, 5. Holly Shelton, 6. Brayton Lynch, 7. Kade Morton, 8. Kyle Jones. 2:02.26

INDY RACE PARTS SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Tanner Carrick, 2. Steve Buckwalter, 3. Alex Bright, 4. Trey Marcham, 5. Ryan Greth, 6. Brayton Lynch, 7. Adam Pierson, 8. Kade Morton, 9. Robert Bell, 10. Chance Morton. 3:09.40

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Rico Abreu, 2. Tanner Thorson, 3. Holly Shelton, 4. Shane Golobic, 5. Tyler Courtney, 6. Ryan Robinson, 7. Justin Grant, 8. Spencer Bayston, 9. Ronnie Gardner, 10. Chad Boat, 11. Tanner Carrick, 12. Tyler Thomas, 13. Ryan Greth, 14. Trey Marcham, 15. Dave Darland, 16. Brady Bacon, 17. Steve Buckwalter, 18. Brayton Lynch, 19. Michael Pickens, 20. Jerry Coons Jr., 21. Alex Bright, 22. Adam Pierson. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-21 Holly Shelton, Lap 22 Spencer Bayston, Laps 23-27 Holly Shelton, Laps 28-30 Rico Abreu.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Brady Bacon-529, 2-Spencer Bayston-479, 3-Shane Golobic-472, 4-Justin Grant-469, 5-Tanner Thorson-441, 6-Tyler Courtney-432, 7-Jerry Coons Jr.-376, 8-Chad Boat-372, 9-Ryan Robinson-335, 10-Tyler Thomas-327.

USAC INDIANA MIDGET WEEK POINTS: 1-Michael Pickens-322, 2-Shane Golobic-321, 3-Tyler Courtney-319, 4-Brady Bacon-313, 5-Rico Abreu-310, 6-Justin Grant-301, 7-Spencer Bayston-293, 8-Tanner Thorson-266, 9-Chad Boat-265, 10-Holly Shelton-224.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: June 11, 2017 – Kokomo Speedway – Kokomo, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Tanner Carrick (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Tanner Carrick (Indy Race Parts Semi Winner)

Rico Abreu (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Tyler Courtney (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Jerry Coons Jr. (Chalk Stix 3rd Heat Winner)

Ryan Greth (Wilwood Brakes 13th Place Finisher)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Shane Golobic (15th to 4th)

PROSOURCE HARD WORK AWARD: Chad Boat

=====

Bayston the Victor, Golobic the Champ in USAC Indiana Midget Week Finale at Kokomo

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Kokomo, Indiana.....Spencer Bayston exorcised the demons that had plagued his relationship with lady luck since his first USAC Indiana Midget Week triumph one year ago to capture his second career USAC National Midget victory Sunday night at Kokomo Speedway.

Meanwhile, Shane Golobic - a steady, heady driver who always seems to play a leading role near the front of the field – made a late-race move with three laps remaining to net himself the 2017 USAC Indiana Midget Week title.

Coming into the final night, nine drivers remained mathematically eligible to win the IMW title. The top-five, in fact, were separated by a mere 12 points. However, misfortune seemed to plague more than its fair share of the top contenders early on.

New Zealand's Michael Pickens led by one marker over Golobic entering the night, but in hot laps, Pickens' night took an unexpected turn as he climbed the turn two wall and flipped wildly. His Seamount Racing crew went to work and managed to get the car repaired in time to make a qualifying attempt and continue as scheduled.

Furthermore, both Justin Grant and Brady Bacon suffered from mechanical problems of their own, forcing them into backup machines for the remainder of the night. Nonetheless, all those who ran into issues would manage to qualify for the night's 30-lap feature event solidly.

One night following a resurgence to the front of the field after an uncharacteristic slow start to their season, a pair of Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports cars occupied both spots on the front row.

Thorson set off from the pole while Lebanon, Indiana's Bayston set up shop on the outside. Despite a consistent run of quality finishes for much of his three-year USAC Midget career, Bayston, the 2015 series Rookie of the Year, hadn't found the promised land of victory lane in over a year at Gas City during 2016 USAC Indiana Midget Week.

One night ago, at Lawrenceburg Speedway, Spencer suffered heartbreak when a late-race battle for the lead with teammate Holly Shelton resulted in a flat left rear tire and a relegation to the tail of the field. Four nights prior, Bayston was on the short-end of a last lap, last corner pass for the win by Pickens at Lincoln Park Speedway.

This time around, Bayston had plans to alter his fortunes from disappointment. Bayston immediately controlled the top side when racing began and wouldn't stray too far from his comfort zone on the cushion throughout the duration of the 30-lap event.

The curb did wreak havoc with Bayston on a couple of occasions, on lap 10, when he snagged it enough to briefly bog him down. Tyler Courtney, a two-time feature winner this week, was ready to pounce on the bottom in response and did so in a three-lap dash on laps 10, 11 and 12 that resulted in three consecutive photo finishes at the line. Grant was credited with leading laps 11 and 12 by the narrowest of margins as Bayston briefly moved to the bottom to stifle Courtney's invasion.

"I went down there one time to block and also to see just what was down there," Bayston remembers. "I thought I'd run right back to the top and carry my momentum up there. I felt better up there. That's where I'd been running all race, so that's what I stayed with."

Bayston quickly returned to the rim-riding style as Courtney settled in on the bottom and a hard-charging Bacon, in the FMR Racing backup, entered the top-three just before the halfway point.

Just after the crossed sticks were displayed, Ryan Robinson rode out a nasty flip in turn three while running in the tenth position. He would walk away uninjured.

Following the restart, Courtney would find a pulse once again as he surged on the bottom past Bayston for the point on laps 20 and 21.

Bayston never wavered from putting the right rear up near the concrete and his patience would pay off as he blew past Courtney on the back straight with nine to go to grab a lead he wouldn't relinquish as he began to navigate lapped traffic. "In turns one and two, there's a lip in the center in the corner that I struggled to figure out once it got a bit ledgy and curby," Bayston pinpointed. "That's when 'Sunshine' showed me a nose and I was able to figure it out. Eventually, the bottom slicked off for him and I got faster."

Courtney was simultaneously caught up in two separate races in the closing laps. The race for the win, which was beginning to slip away, and the on-track contest for second and third-place which would determine the USAC Indiana Midget Week championship. Courtney's prerogative was to finish one spot ahead of Golobic and the title was his. Yet, with just three laps to go, Golobic slipped underneath his CMR teammate in turn one for second and the position that would ultimately prove worthy.

Bayston would finish off his first USAC victory in a calendar year with relative ease in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/Curb Records - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

"It feels really good, but I was starting to panic," Bayston admits. "Coming into this week, I was really hoping to get a couple wins. Each night, we had a fast car, but it just came down to whether I'd do something, or something would happen on the racetrack. We were really close at Lawrenceburg. I was really disappointed at being that close and not getting it done. To get it done tonight at my favorite track, it's a great feeling and my car was so phenomenal and so stable up front on the cushion."

Three-plus seconds behind Bayston, Golobic was able to fend off Courtney for second at the line to capture the IMW title by just six points!

Golobic was the mark of consistency throughout USAC Indiana Midget Week with no finishes outside the top-eight, including a strong second half of IMW that included finishes of 3rd, 4th and 2nd in his Clauson Marshall-Matt Wood Racing/Elk Grove Ford – Driven 2 Save Lives/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

It was just the fourth time in the 13-year history of USAC Indiana Midget Week that the champion didn't win a single race. It's the second year in a row with this occurrence, duplicating Bryan Clauson's feat from 2016. Golobic was hired to run fulltime for Bryan's father Tim's new team in 2017 and the dividends are quickly paying off the self-admitted "wing" driver.

"This whole week says a lot about this team," Golobic begins. "I consider myself a wing sprint car driver, for the most part. I don't get to do a whole lot of midget stuff, so when I come back here, I always feel like I'm a bit behind the eight ball at the start racing against some of these guys who do it so often. This team provides such good cars. I felt like I was right there with them from the get-go and I just got better each night. I got more and more comfortable and my team kept giving me awesome cars. I guess I'm just the consistent guy. I don't want to say I'm a points racer, but I'm not going to make any big mistakes that would cause a major catastrophe with the points at any time during the week."

It was an USAC Indiana Midget Week title that nearly didn't come to fruition for the Fremont, California native. An hour before hot laps on Friday at Bloomington, it was still uncertain whether he'd be racing that night due to illness. Defending USAC Silver Crown champion Chris Windom was on standby and ready to step into the No. 17w if Golobic was unable to make the call.

“My girlfriend (Sarah) and I both got sick,” Golobic points out. “We came down with two different things, actually. She’s struggling with pneumonia and I had a really bad stomach flu and spent the day in E.R. before Bloomington. I wasn’t really sure if I was even going to run Bloomington. The team even had a backup driver ready just in case. Deb & Matt Wood and Sarah did a great job of keeping fluids in me and taking care of me then we went to Bloomington and ran one-two-three. From there, I just kept hydrating and getting as much sleep as I could.”

Golobic entered Sunday’s feature three-up on Courtney. He kept tabs on USAC’s social media and website to stay in-tune with the updated USAC Indiana Midget Week standings throughout the evening and knew precisely where he needed to be and who he had to beat.

“I’m a numbers guy, so coming into the feature, I knew exactly what I needed to do,” Golobic explained. “My feature started off bad; I fell back to eighth or ninth. Pickens and Rico got by me and everybody we needed to beat was getting by us. I figured, ‘man, we got to get going here’ before finding something on the bottom. Once I got to third, I knew “Sunshine” was second in points. If I could beat him, I knew I’d be okay. Spencer was out front, but he was deep enough in points, I didn’t have to worry about him. I got to third, and I knew passing ‘Sunshine’ was going to be for the Midget Week title. I wouldn’t say I would’ve worn him out to win it, but I was definitely going to race him hard. The way it worked out, we were running two different lines for a bit and I was able to sneak by him. He was awesome all week. If it weren’t for engine troubles one night this week, he’d be doing this interview right now.”

In sport and in life, when one experiences the thrill of victory by one, by nature, there is inherently someone experiencing the agony of defeat. Such is the case with Indianapolis, Indiana’s Tyler Courtney who saw the USAC Indiana Midget Week title slip through his fingers with just three laps to go in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Indiana Donor Network/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

“The goal every night is to go out and win,” Courtney says point blank. “When it’s a big deal like ‘Midget Week,’ you want to take it home. It’s a tough deal. When you have one bad night, it throws a hiccup in the plan. You have to keep trucking and I’ve got one of the best teams behind me. I think it shows with us running one-two in points this week. These guys never give up. We broke a motor at Gas City. The crew stayed up all night putting a new one in, then went out and ran third. Tonight, Justin ran into some mechanical issues. They pulled the backup car down and Justin ran fourth. I can’t say enough about these guys. They’re freaking awesome.”

“I hate that I couldn’t get the midget week title, but at least one of us brought it home,” Courtney said as he searched for a silver lining. “Second definitely sucks and it really hurts when it’s a deal like this, but you just got to move on. Hopefully, this is just the start. Hopefully, the rest of the season will be as good, if not better, for us than what’s going on right now. I’m with one of the best midget teams and I think we really put our name out there this week. People have really taken a note of us. The last couple of nights, Keith (Kunz) got his stuff going really good again. It’s not going to be easy the rest of the year, but we’ve got to keep doing what we’re doing and not worry about what they’re doing. We’ve got three really good racecars and three really good racecar drivers. As long as we keep doing what we’re doing, I think we’re going to be the guys to beat.”

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: June 11, 2017 – Kokomo Speedway – Kokomo, Indiana – 13th USAC Indiana Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-13.373; 2. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-13.449; 3. Rico Abreu, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.505; 4. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-13.532; 5. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.601; 6. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.700; 7. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-13.850; 8. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-13.915; 9. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.935; 10. Gage Walker, 7, Walker-14.006; 11. Michael Pickens, 1NZ, Seamount-14.011; 12. Ronnie Gardner, 25x, Rodela-14.021; 13. Ryan Robinson,

71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.033; 14. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-14.075; 15. Steve Buckwalter, 9p, Ronk-14.082; 16. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-14.095; 17. Tyler Nelson, 88, Nelson-14.119; 18. Davey Ray, 33, RayPro-14.154; 19. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-14.189; 20. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-14.302; 21. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.342; 22. Courtney Crone, 25c, Rodela-14.394; 23. Trey Marcham, 32, Marcham-14.410; 24. Jimi Quin, 8GQ, Quin-14.509; 25. Adam Pierson, 76E, Mancini-14.521; 26. Justin Dickerson, 21D, Dickerson-15.041; 27. Chris Baue, 2, Baue-15.146; 28. Robert Bell, 71½, Bell-16.130.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Holly Shelton, 3. Shane Golobic, 4. Tanner Carrick, 5. Ryan Robinson, 6. Adam Pierson, 7. Tyler Nelson. 2:17.65

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tanner Thorson, 2. Jerry Coons Jr., 3. Davey Ray, 4. Justin Grant, 5. Courtney Crone, 6. Gage Walker, 7. Justin Dickerson. 2:20.14

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tyler Thomas, 2. Rico Abreu, 3. Michael Pickens, 4. Alex Bright, 5. Steve Buckwalter, 6. Chris Baue, 7. Trey Marcham. 2:20.23

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Chad Boat, 3. Jimi Quin, 4. Dave Darland, 5. Ronnie Gardner, 6. Robert Bell, 7. Brady Bacon. 2:20.66

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Gage Walker, 2. Ronnie Gardner, 3. Ryan Robinson, 4. Brady Bacon, 5. Adam Pierson, 6. Courtney Crone, 7. Steve Buckwalter, 8. Justin Dickerson, 9. Chris Baue, 10. Robert Bell. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Shane Golobic, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Justin Grant, 5. Brady Bacon, 6. Rico Abreu, 7. Michael Pickens, 8. Chad Boat, 9. Tanner Thorson, 10. Jerry Coons Jr., 11. Alex Bright, 12. Tanner Carrick, 13. Gage Walker, 14. Adam Pierson, 15. Dave Darland, 16. Ronnie Gardner, 17. Courtney Crone, 18. Tyler Thomas, 19. Jimi Quin, 20. Holly Shelton, 21. Davey Ray, 22. Ryan Robinson. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-10 Spencer Bayston, Laps 11-12 Tyler Courtney, Laps 13-19 Spencer Bayston, Laps 20-21 Tyler Courtney, Laps 22-30 Spencer Bayston.

****Michael Pickens flipped during hot laps. Ryan Robinson flipped on lap 16 of the feature.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Brady Bacon-588, 2-Spencer Bayston-559, 3-Shane Golobic-551, 4-Justin Grant-540, 5-Tyler Courtney-507, 6-Tanner Thorson-496, 7-Chad Boat-428, 8-Jerry Coons Jr.-426, 9-Michael Pickens-380, 10-Tyler Thomas-362.

FINAL USAC INDIANA MIDGET WEEK POINTS: 1-Shane Golobic-400, 2-Tyler Courtney-394, 3-Michael Pickens-380, 4-Rico Abreu-376, 5-Spencer Bayston-373, 6-Brady Bacon-372, 7-Justin Grant-372, 8-Tanner Thorson-321, 9-Chad Boat-321, 10-Alex Bright-267.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: July 1, 2017 – Macon Speedway – Macon, Illinois

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Shane Golobic (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Spencer Bayston (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Tanner Thorson (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Kevin Thomas Jr. (Chalk Stix 3rd Heat Winner)

Tyler Courtney (Indy Race Parts 4th Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Chad Boat (18th to 8th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Gage Walker

PROSOURCE HARD WORK AWARD: Adam Pierson

B & W AUTO MART PERSEVERANCE AWARD IN HONOR OF KYLE McCain: Chad Boat

=====

Bell Chimes in with Victory at USAC's Macon Return

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Macon, Illinois.....The formula for winning at Macon Speedway seems simple enough on paper. Minimize mistakes, take advantage of the opportunities you've been given and throw the occasional slider to get to the front.

However, when seemingly all 23 competitors have the same plan, something has to give on the tight, but captivatingly racy 1/5-mile dirt oval.

Norman, Oklahoma's Christopher Bell seized his opportunity following a lap 20 restart, ultimately making the winning move with six laps remaining past Tyler Courtney to score the win in the USAC Midget National Championship's return to Macon for the first time in a decade.

Yet things didn't start out as rosy for Bell in the opening portion of the 30-lap feature. Well, for the most part.

"At the beginning of the race, I started on the inside of row three and felt like I could get a really good jump using the bottom of (turns) one and two," Bell recalls. "I got to third pretty quickly, and then I just stayed down there too long. I stayed down there, and guys started driving by me up top. Next thing I know, I'm back to sixth. I was sixth for a while and couldn't really get anything going."

Bell would remain mired on the outside of the top-five looking in, while, up front, Courtney was dicing it up for the lead position with Spencer Bayston. On lap eight, a wild sequence was kicked into gear when Courtney and Bayston briefly became entangled exiting the second turn, allowing series point leader Brady Bacon to sneak by both briefly to lead the lap.

Courtney gathered his bearings and got Bacon back for the lead between turns one and two. Entering turn three, Bayston made a bid for second. However, both he and Bacon had made separate reservations for one at the same table. Bayston and Bacon pinged nerf bars together. Bacon became the pong, getting the worst end of the deal as he lost momentum and free-fell three spots to fifth.

A caution two laps before halfway for the stopped car of Nick Knepper altered the course of Bell's race as opportunity knocked on his helmet visor.

"On the restart, everybody piled in on the bottom and I was able to rip around them and get to third," Bell explains. "From that point, I knew I was pretty good. I just had to bide my time and wait for the guys in front of me to make mistakes."

And "mistakes" would be plentiful. But it's not easy wheeling a quick, twitchy midget around a bullring such as Macon. It's a full contact, elbows up session that's going to get physical in one way or another. It's the nature of the beast on the tight, but speedy confines.

Meanwhile, Courtney was doing what needed to be done to accomplish his mission twofold. At once, he opened up as substantial of a margin as one can attain at Macon – a full-straightaway lead – that put him in control, but, secondly, kept him distanced from the madness ensuing behind him from second on back.

A single lap goes by quickly at this place. The 26-year-old one-lap track record held by P.J. Jones was lowered to 10.3 seconds by Zach Daum in ProSource Qualifying. Later in the night, the pace was consistently around the 12 second mark through the middle to late-stages of the feature. That's still cooking and, without the lap 20 caution for a Jake Neuman spin, Courtney likely would've been gone scot-free and, ultimately, been makin' Illinois cash and hoisting the winner's check in victory lane.

But, then again, opportunity. Someone else's misfortune can become another's positive turning point in any sport. It's not exactly a case of schadenfreude, although its close. With 11 to go, the raced turned on a dime, all falling into Bell's favor.

Unlike the majority of previous restarts, Courtney now had his hands full as Bell hung right with him, running nose-to-tail for multiple laps eyeing his next move. Bell, the 2013 USAC National Midget champ, went right at Courtney's jaw as the two swapped slide jobs back-and-forth, back-and-forth, trading uppercuts on both ends of the racetrack. Neither were on their heels, though. Both were on the attack in a true, heavyweight bout that showed no indication of either backing down.

"I knew we were about the same speed," Bell remembered. "I just waited to get to traffic. Once you got into traffic, you'd be able to dice it up a little bit. We never got there, though, with the yellows coming out. That one yellow got him out of his rhythm there. Although he did get a really good restart and got a way a little bit. But then, he tripped on the cushion one time and I was able to close the gap. From then on, it was just about sliding him."

With seven to go, Bell attacked, and Courtney countered. A lap later, Courtney attacked, and Bell countered with enough sliders to make a full meal out of. Courtney made one last-ditch effort with three laps remaining using a turn one slider on Bell. Once again, Bell answered the call and ducked back under Courtney to yank the lead back into his possession, gapping Courtney who now saw the second spot escape his grasp and fall into Bayston's lap.

"Sunshine (Courtney) was really fast out front by himself," Bell credits. "We got the yellow and that got him out of his rhythm. He started making mistakes and I was able to get to him. Then, it became a chess game of who could slide each other the best and break each other's momentum. I felt like he broke my momentum, and I broke his momentum."

Yet the final three laps for Bell on his own wouldn't go without a little excitement. With the white flag in hand and Bayston closing, Bell stumbled atop the cushion between turns three and four. As fate would have it, Bayston was a little too close for comfort and had to react to Bell's slight misadventure, forcing Bayston to whoa his ride down just enough to prevent himself a chance to capitalize.

"I got behind Christopher with about three laps to go," Bayston remembers. "I tried to get away from everyone behind us and was waiting, waiting, waiting. Christopher kind of stumbled in (turns) three and four coming to the white flag. In turn, it caused all of us behind him to screw up and he was able to get away. That kind of scrapped the whole plan I had set for those final two laps."

Bell recovered, running a sweet and sound 30th lap for a relatively comfortable margin of seven-tenths of a second to take the win over Bayston, Courtney, Justin Grant and KSE Racing Products Hard Charger Shane Golobic, who came all the way from the 21st starting position.

To Bell, his 18th career USAC National Midget victory wasn't merely about being the best for all 30 laps or even just being the best at the end. To him, the race for the win purely came down to limiting mistakes in traffic and on the tricky cushion in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/DeWalt – TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

"I've been coming to Macon for a long time now and I've run a lot of races here," Bell begins. "Typically, the curb will ledge up really big like that. It's just figuring out where your marks are, when to be in the cushion and when to come off the cushion. I felt like I got going pretty good there just past halfway. I just had to figure out how to use the cushion without getting tripped up in it. There at the end, once Sunshine and I started racing, it came down to who could screw up the least and make the cleanest laps. It was super technical and super hard. That's how it should be!"

After a seven-race drought to begin the season, the Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian team has now won its third in a row with three different drivers. The most recent victor during this streak prior to Saturday night was Kokomo "USAC Indiana Midget Week" winner Spencer Bayston of Lebanon, Indiana, who grabbed second in his Curb Record – TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

"It was very physical out there," Bayston said. "It seems to be that way every single time we come here. That's just how the place is. Some people like it and some people don't. Early on, I felt pretty good. Sunshine had a good lead, and I didn't know if I was going to be able to get to him. With all those cautions, I was able to adjust and get a little bit better. Toward the end, Christopher and I worked our way around them, and we were able to get out front."

When Bayston saw Bell and Courtney throwing haymakers at each other, he admits that he was on his toes and ready to pounce if a tangle between the two were to ensue.

"They were really going at it, so I was kind of waiting for something to develop to allow me to get in there," Bayston acknowledged. "When they start battling like that, they kind of back up to you. I was able to get in and we were both able to work by Sunshine in the final laps."

Tyler Courtney led a race-high 23 laps and continued his run of success as well with a fifth consecutive top-five finish in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Indiana Donor Network/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: July 1, 2017 – Macon Speedway – Macon, Illinois

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Zach Daum, 5D, Daum-10.325 (New Track Record); 2. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-10.417, 3. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-10.424, 4. Christopher Bell, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-10.441, 5. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-10.496; 6. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-10.527; 7. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-10.638; 8. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-10.705; 9. Nick Knepper, 55, Knepper-10.756; 10. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-10.778; 11. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-10.779; 12. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-10.808; 13. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-10.842; 14. Colten Cottle, 5c, Cottle-10.850; 15. Tyler Nelson, 91, Harris-10.857; 16. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-10.862; 17. Daniel Robinson, 57D, McCreery-10.883; 18. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-10.883; 19. Dalton Camfield, 87c, Camfield-10.920; 20. Joe Wirth, 77w, Wirth-10.941; 21. Jake Neuman, 3N, Neuman-10.960; 22. Kyle Schuett, 9K, Schuett-10.963; 23. Gage Walker, 7, Walker-10.973; 24. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-11.008; 25. Ray Seach, 2, Seach-11.015; 26. David Budres, 31, Manic-11.043; 27. Daniel Adler, 50, Adler-11.105; 28. Shelby Bosie, 3B, Bosie-11.196; 29. Mark Chisholm, 56x, Fifty6x-11.223; 30. Cody Weisensel, 20, Weisensel-11.233; 31. Chase Jones, 22, Petry/Goff-11.245; 32. Tyler Robbins, 35, Robbins-11.289; 33. Matt Veatch, 56v, Fifty6x-11.616; 34. Devin Camfield, 17c, Camfield-11.722; 35. Travis Young, 11y, Young-11.890; 36. D.J. Raw, 33, RayPro-12.129; 37. Brad Kraus, 6B, Kraus-NT; 38. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-NT (time of 10.615 disallowed).

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Jake Neuman, 2. Nick Knepper, 3. Dave Darland, 4. Tyler Thomas, 5. Zach Daum, 6. Daniel Robinson, 7. Ray Seach, 8. Mark Chisholm, 9. Brad Kraus, 10. Matt Veatch. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Colten Cottle, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Kyle Schuett, 4. Brayton Lynch, 5. Ryan Robinson, 6. Holly Shelton, 7. David Budres, 8. Devin Camfield, 9. Cody Weisensel, 10. Tanner Carrick. NT

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Gage Walker, 2. Tanner Thorson, 3. Justin Grant, 4. Tyler Nelson, 5. Brady Bacon, 6. Chase Jones, 7. Daniel Adler, 8. Dalton Camfield, 9. Travis Young. 1:56.33

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Christopher Bell, 3. Jerry Coons Jr., 4. Tyler Courtney, 5. Chad Boat, 6. Tyler Robbins, 7. Shelby Bosie, 8. D.J. Raw, 9. Joe Wirth. NT

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Zach Daum, 2. Chad Boat, 3. Brady Bacon, 4. Daniel Robinson, 5. David Budres, 6. Holly Shelton, 7. Ryan Robinson, 8. Daniel Adler, 9. Dalton Camfield, 10. Mark Chisholm, 11. Chase Jones, 12. Matt Veatch, 13. Travis Young, 14. Shelby Bosie, 15. Tyler Robbins, 16. Devin Camfield, 17. Ray Seach, 18. Brad Kraus, 19. Cody Weisensel, 20. D.J. Raw. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Christopher Bell, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Justin Grant, 5. Shane Golobic, 6. Zach Daum, 7. Brady Bacon, 8. Chad Boat, 9. Dave Darland, 10. Daniel Robinson, 11. Holly Shelton, 12. Ryan Robinson, 13. Jerry Coons Jr., 14. Gage Walker, 15. Jake Neuman, 16. Brayton Lynch, 17. Tyler Nelson, 18. Kyle Schuett, 19. Colten Cottle, 20. Tyler Thomas, 21. Nick Knepper, 22. David Budres, 23. Tanner Thorson. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-7 Tyler Courtney, Lap 8 Brady Bacon, Laps 9-24 Tyler Courtney, Laps 25-30 Christopher Bell.

****Tanner Carrick flipped during the second heat. Holly Shelton flipped during the second heat.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Brady Bacon-642, 2-Spencer Bayston-634, 3-Shane Golobic-617, 4-Justin Grant-607, 5-Tyler Courtney-576, 6-Tanner Thorson-530, 7-Chad Boat-480, 8-Jerry Coons Jr.-469, 9-Ryan Robinson-399, 10-Holly Shelton-397.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: July 2, 2017 – Lincoln Speedway – Lincoln, Illinois

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Zach Daum (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Jake Neuman (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Colten Cottle (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Gage Walker (Chalk Stix 3rd Heat Winner)

Shane Golobic (Indy Race Parts 4th Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Shane Golobic (21st to 5th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Jerry Coons Jr.

=====

Bell Goes 2 for 2 on Illinois Midget Swing at Lincoln

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Lincoln, Illinois.....It had been three years since a driver had won consecutive USAC Midget National Championship features at two different Illinois tracks.

That driver was Christopher Bell, who captured a pair of victories at Tri-City Speedway (Granite City) and Belle-Clair Speedway (Belleville) during the 2013 and 2014 seasons.

It was a rare case of déjà vu Sunday night in the series' return to the Logan County Fairgrounds' Lincoln Speedway for the first time since 1959. Norman, Oklahoma's Bell staked his claim of Illinois by writing the deed that turned the Land of Lincoln into the Land of Bell for the time being, racing to the front on the same, exact lap (25) as he did the night before in his victory at Macon Speedway to lead the same two drivers, Spencer Bayston and Tyler Courtney, across the line for the second time in as many nights.

In front of an electric, standing room only crowd, Bell began the race from the third position, but it wasn't an immediate charge to the front, as he stayed put for much of the first half of the 30-lapper, wavering back-and-forth between third and fourth as Tyler Thomas, then Tyler Courtney, took turns heading the field early in the going.

On lap six, the scariest incident of the season occurred when Brayton Lynch and Chad Boat made contact entering turn one. Lynch's car launched into the fence, snapping one of the fence posts in half and taking down a large section of catch fencing and the safety light with him. Meanwhile, Boat's car launched over the wall and fencing at Mach-10 speed, flipping nose-to-tail roughly 15 times before, eventually, landing near a parking lot a football field-distance away from where the incident began. Fortunately, both drivers were able to walk away from the scene.

On the ensuing restart, the top-three of Courtney, Bayston and Thomas tussled for position before Courtney found a foothold and pulled out to a ten-car-length margin advantage.

Back in third and fourth, Bell was starting to find his rhythm as he muscled the curb on the bottom of turn two to maneuver into the top-three. As he began to close on Bayston for second on the 10th lap, the fourth stoppage in the first third of the event came out when Kyle Schuett came to a rest in turn three.

The back-and-forth grapple between speeding to the front under green flag conditions and idling under yellow can bring about agitation. The starts and stops had become persistent early on as, every time Bell began to make a charge, his momentum would be required to cease for the moment, and he would have to recover his equilibrium when action resumed.

"At the beginning of the race, we weren't able to find a rhythm due to the yellows," Bell recalls. "There was no flow. We get a lap here, a lap there, then a yellow would fly. My car was really good, though. I knew early I was good. I just needed laps to get going. It's tough when there's a bunch of yellows. The longer the green flag runs are, the better I typically am."

However, that would allow a number of anxious drivers to regroup and find their groove. Yet, when the green flag flew on the lap 10 restart, every driver's groove was initially on the bottom. Bayston was able to work his way under Courtney on the back straight to grab the lead as the two darted toward turn three.

"I was able to work the bottom of turns one and two pretty well and was all the way down on the berm," Bayston explains. "I got a good drive off and got to the lead and run. But my line started to go away midrace, so I had to figure something else out."

Near mid-race, Bell had caught up to Courtney in a tug-of-war for second. The two swapped the position multiple times, exchanging sliders and altering back-and-forth between the high-and-low lines on laps 14 and 15. As Courtney and Bell crossed the line and crossed sticks were presented for the halfway mark, the two banged wheels, impeding Bell's progress as he fell to fourth and Shane Golobic took advantage on the bottom to rope in the third spot.

Bell saw the proverbial writing on the wall at that point and knew if he was going to win the thing, the top was going to be the place to do it.

"I knew the top was my only option if I wanted to win the race," Bell admits. "I really couldn't get anything going anywhere else. I was able to get the top going and I think I was the first guy up there. The biggest thing was just getting the top cleaned off, keeping it clean and maintaining my momentum."

On lap 19, Bell disposed of Golobic for third and, two laps later, he was back in the thick of the hunt for second as he worked the high line with Courtney occupying the middle groove. Bell put his right rear rubber right up against the wall in turn two with nine to go, possibly brushing it as he closed the ever-shrinking gap. In turn four, however, Courtney slid up in front of Bell momentarily. Bell crossed over underneath Courtney and rocketed to second at the line.

Bell had the high-line working to perfection and, in almost no time, Bayston's one-second lead had ceased to exist. Bell took his first swing in turn three on lap 24, diving to the bottom and springing to the top to briefly hold the position.

Bayston never wavered from the middle, kept the wheels straight and retook the position by a car length at the stripe. Bell immediately aimed low once again to repeat the move, but Bayston anticipated the move and snatched the bottom line first entering turn one as Bell shot back up to the razor-thin cushion and surfed it exquisitely around Bayston to retake the point.

"Christopher showed me his nose and I tried to nail my line in one and two to get in front of him up top," Bayston details. "He was able to squeak by. It seemed like he was up there the whole race and had it figured out. It took me too long to get going before I was able to get back to him."

Bell started to pull away and appeared destined for Lincoln glory, but a caution a lap later for a D.J. Raw spin on lap 26 bunched up the field and provided Bayston another opportunity, something that Bell was not too fond of.

"I felt like the last yellow hurt me pretty badly because I was getting going on the fence when it came out," Bell said. "You really have to pay attention to hit your marks and, thankfully, I was able to pick my marks back up."

Bell's marks were superb, no doubt, but Bayston was hoping to throw a bit of dissonance into the situation as he fired a slider into the first turn on the final restart. Bell, whose midget racing roots were planted at this venue earlier in the decade, was forced to come off the comfort of the cushion and duck his nose toward the middle. Bell made slight contact with Bayston's tail tank with his right front wheel as he entered the middle of a three-car sandwich off turn two that witnessed the reemergence of Courtney. Courtney held the advantage by a half-car length before Bell's momentum pushed him past to a race lead he would ultimately tie up, stamp and deliver.

Courtney and Bayston exchanged the second and third spots multiple times in the final laps with Bayston having to slide job Courtney in turn three on both the 27th and 28th circuits before securing the position for good.

After a race-long sparring match with Courtney, then Bayston, Bell would cruise to a relatively comfortable 2.173-second margin of victory over Bayston and Courtney, who all finished in the same order for the second consecutive night. Golobic and Jerry Coons Jr. rounded out the top-five.

It was Bell's 19th career USAC National Midget victory in the Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/DeWalt – TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota, tying him with Coons, Stan Fox and Jason Leffler for 32nd on the all-time list.

Lebanon, Indiana's Spencer Bayston led 15 laps and was in position to win for the second time in three races but had to settle for his second 2nd place finish in as many nights in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/Curb Records - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota. In the process, Bayston emerged with the series point lead by 21 markers over Brady Bacon.

"Last year, I raced all season thinking about points. This year, I'm trying not to do that," Bayston explains. "Obviously, coming home second tonight, (crewman) Big Al (Scroggins) has given me good cars these last couple nights. I thought we kind of had it there early on. I was able to get to the lead, but I was a sitting duck when the line I was running started to go

away in turns one and two. Christopher went to work up top, but once I got up there, it took a couple laps for me to get it figured out and that's when he walked away from me. The crew's been working really hard and the results are really starting to show, but I admit I'm starting to get tired of finishing second."

Bayston refused to disappear when he lost the lead to his teammate with five to go, utilizing one final slider on the last restart for a shot at victory.

"Looking back, I think it might've been a smarter decision to stay in line and figure it out before I pursued him," Bayston believes. "I was worried he'd get away from me and that was going to be my one and only shot. I felt like I had a good enough restart, but he had the momentum and was able to get right back around me. It's another second-place run, but we're happy. We'll move on to the next one and learn from this."

Tyler Courtney of Indianapolis, Indiana raced to a sixth-consecutive top-five finish, finishing third in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Indiana Donor Network/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

"It's not exactly the night we wanted," Courtney lamented. "Obviously, you always want to win, but we were just a little off tonight. We got third again, which doesn't feel all the great right now, but for big picture purposes, we're doing what we need to do. We just got to keep running up front and knocking down podium finishes."

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: July 2, 2017 – Lincoln Speedway – Lincoln, Illinois

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.616; 2. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-13.652; 3. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.754; 4. Christopher Bell, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.765; 5. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-13.765; 6. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-13.781; 7. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-13.793; 8. Gage Walker, 57, RAB-13.797; 9. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-13.833; 10. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.856; 11. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.867; 12. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-13.963; 13. Jake Neuman, 3N, Neuman-13.964; 14. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-13.968; 15. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-14.087; 16. Kyle Schuett, 9K, Schuett-14.120; 17. Chase Jones, 22, Petry/Goff-14.196; 18. Shelby Bosie, 3B, Bosie-14.216; 19. Dave Darland, 11, Gray-14.284; 20. Daniel Robinson, 57D, McCreery-14.288; 21. Tyler Nelson, 91, Harris-14.297; 22. Dalton Camfield, 87c, Camfield-14.423; 23. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-14.429; 24. Ray Seach, 2, Seach-14.475; 25. Mike Hess, 82, Johnson-14.478; 26. Mark Chisholm, 56x, Fifty6x-14.604; 27. Devin Camfield, 17c, Camfield-15.050; 28. D.J. Raw, 33, RayPro-16.231; 29. Zach Daum, 5D, Daum-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tanner Thorson, 2. Jake Neuman, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Shane Golobic, 5. Zach Daum, 6. Chase Jones, 7. Tyler Nelson, 8. Mike Hess. 2:34.35

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Justin Grant, 2. Jerry Coons Jr., 3. Tyler Thomas, 4. Holly Shelton, 5. Mark Chisholm, 6. Shelby Bosie, 7. Dalton Camfield. 2:38.77

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Ryan Robinson, 3. Dave Darland, 4. Chad Boat, 5. Tanner Carrick, 6. Devin Camfield, 7. Brady Bacon. 2:34.54

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Christopher Bell, 2. Kyle Schuett, 3. Brayton Lynch, 4. Daniel Robinson, 5. Ray Seach, 6. D.J. Raw, 7. Gage Walker. NT

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Brady Bacon, 2. Zach Daum, 3. Tanner Carrick, 4. Tyler Nelson, 5. Shelby Bosie, 6. Ray Seach, 7. D.J. Raw, 8. Devin Camfield, 9. Chase Jones, 10. Mark Chisholm, 11. Mike Hess, 12. Gage Walker. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Christopher Bell, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Shane Golobic, 5. Jerry Coons Jr., 6. Justin Grant, 7. Tanner Thorson, 8. Ryan Robinson, 9. Brady Bacon, 10. Tyler Thomas, 11. Zach Daum, 12. Holly Shelton, 13. Tanner

Carrick, 14. Dave Darland, 15. Daniel Robinson, 16. Kyle Schuett, 17. Jake Neuman, 18. Tyler Nelson, 19. D.J. Raw, 20. Shelby Bosie, 21. Ray Seach, 22. Brayton Lynch, 23. Chad Boat. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-4 Tyler Thomas, Laps 5-9 Tyler Courtney, Laps 10-24 Spencer Bayston, Laps 25-30 Christopher Bell.

****Brady Bacon** flipped during the third heat. Chad Boat & Brayton Lynch flipped on lap 6 of the feature. Boat exited the track over the turn one wall.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-713, 2-Brady Bacon-692, 3-Shane Golobic-683, 4-Justin Grant-675, 5-Tyler Courtney-648, 6-Tanner Thorson-596, 7-Jerry Coons Jr.-534, 8-Chad Boat-508, 9-Ryan Robinson-455, 10-Tyler Thomas-442.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: July 3, 2017 – Illinois State Fairgrounds Multi-Purpose Arena – Springfield, Illinois – Adam Lopez Illinois Midget Nationals

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Tanner Thorson (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Tanner Thorson (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Justin Grant (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Spencer Bayston (Chalk Stix 3rd Heat Winner)

Christopher Bell (Indy Race Parts 4th Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Ryan Robinson (20th to 8th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Tanner Carrick

=====

Courtney Conquers Inaugural Illinois Midget Nationals

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Springfield, Illinois.....Throughout the 2017 USAC Midget National Championship season, Tyler Courtney has proven himself as the streak-stopper.

After leading each of the previous three races at Kokomo, Ind., Macon, Ill. and Lincoln, Ill. for a total of 32 laps, Courtney had put together a string of three-straight third-place finishes. Though some would accept that as a solid night, the driver known as “Sunshine” felt that was a letdown and immediately sought to end that run of events with a performance he wouldn’t regret.

On Monday night’s Independence Day Eve meet at the Illinois State Fairgrounds Multi-Purpose Arena, Courtney did just that as, for the third time this season, he put an end to another driver’s two-race winning streak. This time, it was the previous two nights’ Macon and Lincoln winner Christopher Bell, who was cast in the role of Courtney’s pursuer instead of

the alternative as Courtney captured victory number three on the season in the inaugural Adam Lopez "Illinois Midget Nationals."

Earlier, Courtney had shut down similar three-peat attempts in Montpelier, Ind. as Brady Bacon aimed for three-in-a-row and at Bloomington, Ind. where Michael Pickens attempted to go for a third in as many nights.

From the get-go, it was a pair of Clauson Marshall Racing cars conducting the orchestra as Shane Golobic and Courtney ran 1-2 from their front row starting positions. Courtney routinely poked the nose of his car to the outside of his teammate Golobic as he worked the outside groove – a place that was uninhabitable earlier in the evening prior to a track rework.

However, a smorgasbord of early cautions created a secession of starts and stops that prevented any driver from getting into a consistent rhythm. The tight corners and close-quarters racing made each pass challenging, but Courtney was game following a lap five restart.

Golobic worked the low line while Courtney occupied the middle-to-high road and, following multiple advances on the outside at the exit of turns two and four, Courtney surged ahead between turns three and four a lap later to become the maestro. Three laps later, Bell followed suit around the top past Golobic for second.

"I knew it was going to be a chess match between Shane and I to see who could get to the front and get space between them and the guy behind them," Courtney anticipated. "I was able to find the top first and, luckily enough, on a restart, I got a lapped car in between us. That helped me out quite a bit for the next green flag run."

Twenty-two cars on a one-fifth-mile doesn't leave much room for error and, when Courtney entered the tail-end of the field by lap 10, he discovered cars high, low, here, there and everywhere as he sought to find that perfect balance between patience and aggression, an object of desire that has long baffled man since the beginning of time.

"On tracks like this, there's a very fine line," Courtney acknowledges. "On a bigger track, you can afford to be patient and wait for these guys to make you get up on the wheel. Tonight, on this track, you had to get up on the wheel for all 40. You have to get by lapped cars in case there's a caution to pad your lead. You just have to be on it from the drop of the green."

Some drivers draw that fine line with a finely-sharpened pencil. Some draw that line with a crayon. Courtney sharpened the pencil and brought out the lead as he picked through the traffic with a fine-tooth comb and, at one point, squeezed between the lapped cars of Tanner Carrick and Justin Allgaier at the stripe with no room to spare as Bell began to bear down on him on the 15th lap.

Track position is important in this instance because each lapped car a driver can place between them and their closest lead-lap competitor can provide just the slightest edge necessary in the quest toward holding the check at the end of the night.

Yet, the scale of difficulty is 10/10 when trying to keep a driver like 2013 USAC National Midget champion Christopher Bell mired behind lappers for too long as he maneuvered back to Courtney's bumper for the lap 20 restart. Bell tried in turn one but lost a bit of momentum as he slid through the middle and Courtney shot off the turn two lip.

A lap later, a melee ensued in turn three as Justin Grant, Nick Hamilton, Tyler Nelson and Ryan Robinson all became entangled. Robinson took the worst of it, tipping over after tripping over the berm at the edge of the infield and the racing surface. No harm, no foul and he would restart at the tail with the other three involved in the incident.

On the ensuing restart, Bell and Golobic began a side-by-side battle that would occupy them for much of the remainder of the race. The two would swap second and third back-and-forth with each unable to surge ahead by much more than a car-length at any point over the next several laps.

With 16 to go, Golobic and Bell would erase Courtney's interval and would soon go three-wide exiting the second turn with Golobic low, Bell in the middle and Courtney running high, wide and handsome up against the concrete blocks.

Courtney would maintain his lead after sustaining the challenge to the throne with Bell and Golobic occupying second and third in that order.

Bell and Golobic remained occupied with the fierce duel for second as eight laps remained. Bell worked the middle to high lane and Golobic stayed on the shorter way around on the bottom. On lap 33, Bell snagged some soil with the right rear in a turn two jolt that cost him a scant amount as Golobic gobbled him up and was able to clear him with certainty exiting turn four for the runner-up position.

Though no less than six lapped cars stood in his path in the final laps, Courtney successfully avoided a sting from the hornet's nest of midgets that lie ahead and was able to taste the sweet nectar of victory for the third time in the series in less than a month over Golobic, Bell, KSE Hard Charger Dave Darland and point leader Spencer Bayston.

Additionally, the win by Courtney and CMR ended the stranglehold of KKM/Curb-Agajanian over the past four events as the back-and-forth, tug-of-war for team supremacy wages on into the second-half of its calendar.

A brand-new racetrack presents a ball of new experiences for all. Where to find the high line and how hard to push are issues that are resolved after some seat time on the track. A second line began to come into play during the qualifying races and remained throughout the rest of the night, creating multiple lines that Courtney used to his advantage in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Indiana Donor Network/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

"The car just kept coming to me and the track kind of moved down from where the guys were blowing stuff up into the middle. I could run through the middle, so I didn't have to run against the wall. Lapped cars went to the right places at the right time and it all worked out. These races are tough, though. You need to put all 30 or 40 laps in this case, together, and tonight, we were able to do that. With the amount of traffic out there, you're looking 100 feet ahead of you all the time. The track may only be 200 feet, but I'm looking 100 feet ahead of me to make sure a guy's not spinning out, getting tight or chalking down. You got to be looking forward, but you still have to be playing defense. It's just a matter of paying attention to the motor noises behind you, watching guys in front of you and making the right moves at the right time."

It's natural to compare a new venue to that of an existing venue. One that came to mind for many was another fellow Illinois bullring located adjacent to their famed one-mile dirt oval – the indoor Southern Illinois Center facility in Du Quoin. Like Springfield's Multi-Purpose Arena, the track is flat as a pancake, which seems to suit the CMR team – winners of the last four races in Du Quoin – just fine.

"The success we've had makes me like the flat tracks like this," Courtney said. "I think it's more a testament to CMR (Clauson Marshall Racing). (Team owner) Tim (Clauson) was winning at these tracks before we even had this team together. I get good cars night-in, night-out. I wasn't able to deliver the first two nights, but luckily, I was able to put 40 laps together and park it there in victory lane."

Fremont, California's Shane Golobic led five laps and slipped back to third in the early going, but fought back to score yet another strong finish, moving up to second in the standings in the process, in his Clauson Marshall-Matt Wood Racing/Elk Grove Ford – Driven 2 Save Lives/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

"I got out to the early lead, running the bottom," Golobic recalls. "I knew they had reworked the track prior to the feature and the top was going to come in at some point. I guess I was just a corner too late getting there. Sunshine (Courtney) went around me then I went up to the top and I guess Christopher had a run and slid me. I ended up behind both of them and had to work my way back where we were able to get back by him toward the very end. I raced Christopher pretty much the whole race. It's always a good time racing with him. He's a clean racer and we pushed each other as hard as we could and never made any contact. On such a small racetrack, it's pretty hard to do something like that."

During a long, strenuous season, smart racers always seem to be in the hunt for race wins and, ultimately, the championship. Golobic hasn't won yet in 2017, but night-after-night, you will find his name, and his car, near the front. Consistent results such as his don't just happen by chance.

"You just need to pick your spots and decide when you're going to make your move and when you probably shouldn't," Golobic explains. "You just want to try and keep yourself out of trouble, which is easy to get into on a track this size. There's a balance. All three of the guys that ran in the top-three tonight have a lot of patience, but a lot of aggression at the same time. I believe that's why we ended up front."

Norman, Oklahoma's Christopher Bell had a highly-successful weekend in his return to the USAC Midget wars this weekend in the Land of Lincoln, following up two winning performances with a third-place run Monday night in Springfield in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/DeWalt – TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: July 3, 2017 – Illinois State Fairgrounds Multi-Purpose Arena – Springfield, Illinois – Adam Lopez Illinois Midget Nationals

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Dave Darland (#11 Gray), 2. Tanner Thorson (#67 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 3. Christopher Bell (#21 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 4. Spencer Bayston (#97 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 5. Tyler Thomas (#91T Thomas), 6. Terry Babb (#88 Babb), 7. D.J. Raw (#33 RayPro). 1:57.64

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Nick Hamilton (#32 Hamilton), 2. Justin Grant (#39BC Clauson Marshall), 3. Tyler Courtney (#7BC Clauson Marshall), 4. Mike Hess (#3H Neuman), 5. Jake Neuman (#3N Neuman), 6. Justin Allgaier (#7A Allgaier), 7. Joey Moughan (#29 Moughan). NT

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Holly Shelton (#67K Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 2. Mark Chisholm (#56x Fifty6x), 3. Tyler Nelson (#91 Harris), 4. Jerry Coons Jr. (#25 Petry-Goff), 5. Matt Veatch (#56v Fifty6x), 6. Shelby Bosie (#3B Bosie), 7. Rico Abreu (#97K Kunz/Curb-Agajanian). NT

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Brady Bacon (#76m FMR), 2. Daniel Robinson (#57D McCreery), 3. Shane Golobic (#17w Clauson Marshall/Wood), 4. Gage Walker (#7 Walker), 5. Tanner Carrick (71K Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 6. Ryan Robinson (#71 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 7. Kyle Schuett (#9K Schuett). NT

FIRST QUALIFIER: (12 laps) 1. Gage Walker, 2. Ryan Robinson, 3. Spencer Bayston, 4. Christopher Bell, 5. Justin Grant, 6. Dave Darland, 7. Joey Moughan. 2:25.48

SECOND QUALIFIER: (12 laps) 1. Tyler Thomas, 2. Jerry Coons Jr., 3. Tyler Nelson, 4. Nick Hamilton, 5. Mark Chisholm, 6. D.J. Raw, 7. Shelby Bosie. NT

THIRD QUALIFIER: (12 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Terry Babb, 3. Daniel Robinson, 4. Tanner Carrick, 5. Jake Neuman, 6. Holly Shelton, 7. Rico Abreu. 2:28.62

FOURTH QUALIFIER: (12 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Justin Allgaier, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Kyle Schuett, 5. Brady Bacon, 6. Matt Veatch, 7. Mike Hess. 2:30.55

SEMI: (15 laps) 1. Ryan Robinson, 2. Justin Allgaier, 3. Jake Neuman, 4. Kyle Schuett, 5. Mike Hess, 6. Tanner Carrick, 7. D.J. Raw, 8. Shelby Bosie, 9. Matt Veatch, 10. Terry Babb, 11. Joey Moughan. NT

FEATURE: (40 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Shane Golobic, 3. Christopher Bell, 4. Dave Darland, 5. Spencer Bayston, 6. Jerry Coons Jr., 7. Gage Walker, 8. Brady Bacon, 9. Jake Neuman, 10. Tanner Thorson, 11. Justin Grant, 12. Kyle Schuett, 13. Justin Allgaier, 14. Holly Shelton, 15. Tyler Thomas, 16. Daniel Robinson, 17. Ryan Robinson, 18. Mark Chisholm, 19. Tyler Nelson, 20. Tanner Carrick, 21. Nick Hamilton, 22. Mike Hess. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-5 Shane Golobic, Laps 6-40 Tyler Courtney.

****Ryan Robinson** flipped on lap 21 of the feature.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-771, 2-Shane Golobic-750, 3-Brady Bacon-741, 4-Tyler Courtney-718, 5-Justin Grant-716, 6-Tanner Thorson-639, 7-Jerry Coons Jr.-589, 8-Chad Boat-508, 9-Ryan Robinson-484, 10-Holly Shelton-476.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: August 1, 2017 – Jefferson County Speedway – Fairbury, Nebraska – Riverside Chevrolet Tuesday Night Thunder Presented by Westin Packaged Meats & Schmidt’s Sanitation

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Dave Darland (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Nick Hamilton (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Holly Shelton (Chalk Stix 3rd Heat Winner)

Brady Bacon (Indy Race Parts 4th Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Dave Darland (15th to 4th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Justin Allgaier

=====

Thorson Thunders to First USAC Midget Win of 2017 at Jefferson Co.

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Fairbury, Nebraska.....Patience is a virtue, so they say and, indeed, good things come to those who wait.

Tanner Thorson was the epitome of each proverbial phrase at Jefferson County Speedway’s 2nd Annual Riverside Chevrolet “Tuesday Night Thunder” presented by Westin Packaged Meats and Schmidt’s Sanitation. The reigning series champ out of Minden, Nevada, relentlessly hassled Tyler Thomas for the race lead throughout the first half of the 40-lap main event. On the 25th lap, Thorson made the winning move with a successful turn four slider on Thomas and, from there, never relinquished the point to capture his first USAC National Midget feature victory of 2017.

The 21-year-old hadn’t won in the series since tearing off a three-race win streak in October of 2016 to propel him to his first USAC title. Tuesday night’s victory was the first for Thorson in nearly 10 months. Furthermore, his win in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota was the latest in the season a defending USAC National Midget champion has gone before scoring his first win since Jerry Coons Jr. in 2008.

Patience speaks many languages and Thorson was able to transcribe them into a sweet song during the 40-lap main event, ten laps longer than the norm. As Thomas broke away for the lead, Thorson knew he had the car and the ability as well as the inclination that traffic would most likely come into play, so he waited until the race came to him.

“When I got close to Tyler (Thomas) in the beginning part of the race, I knew it was still pretty early,” Thorson recalls. “I just wanted to be in ride mode. He ended up pulling away from me for a little bit. We ended up running him back down

because of lapped traffic. We're not used to having these longer races, so ten more laps are a little bit different and it's a little bit harder. More laps definitely played into our favor instead of us trying to go all out at once at the beginning part of the race."

Yet outside front row starter Thomas appeared to be under control as he ripped the top to secure the top spot early on. From the outset, though, Thorson was never too far in the background as he took a gamble to try and slide Thomas numerous times, coming up snake eyes on each occasion, including on lap nine when Thomas slipped over the turn four cushion in lapped traffic. Thorson was there, but not quite close enough to wrap the horseshoe around the stake.

For Thomas, conservation was not a viable option. As soon as he pushed off for the start of the feature and gassed it the first time, he noticed an off-kilter sound that was out of the ordinary. As it turned out, his engine was down a cylinder.

Behind the eight-ball before the green flag, Thomas felt that, despite the extended distance, preserving equipment while racing in the lead was not in the plans.

Despite the mechanical bugaboo, by the 15th lap, Thomas held a 1.7 second lead over Thorson as he bid to become the second-straight driver to win his first career USAC National Midget feature at Jefferson County Speedway in as many years.

A freight train of cars rode the rails at the top of the one-fifth-mile as they entered lapped traffic, making it a challenge to simply throttle past a fellow competitor and, instead, required alternate railways to make a clean pass.

"The way the track was, it was really fast around the top compared to the bottom," Thorson explained. "If you left the groove, it was hard to get back up into it without getting into somebody. I was trying to be very careful and respectful without getting into Tyler. I don't like racing that way. We just played it patient. He ran into some lapped traffic and then we were lucky enough to get a yellow. That definitely saved us."

Thomas, on the other hand, wasn't as delighted to see the yellow. In many cases, a yellow for a leader working through lapped traffic is a blessing as it provides an open highway without an obstacle in sight. Nonetheless, for Thomas, the obstacle lied under his hood, making each ensuing restart a chore.

"That first long run we had, we were good," Thomas remembers. "I kept my momentum up around the top and didn't really have any pressure behind me. The yellows really killed me because I couldn't restart well. Once I got to the top, I just didn't have the power to pull out of it. I wasn't sure if I needed to slide myself or just get to the cushion. I don't think it mattered. I didn't have the power to pull myself out of anything."

Following a lap 24 caution for the stopped car of Justin Grant, Thorson knew he couldn't be shackled much longer. Despite his self-described habits when attempting sliders, Thorson went to school throughout the first half of the race and realized what he needed to do. The moment was his this time around and he wasn't going to let this one slip away.

"I had to push it a little harder," Thorson exclaimed. "I have a tendency of getting in there a little soft when I throw slide jobs. I don't feel like wrecking and I don't want to wreck anybody else. On the restart, he didn't quite get going because of his motor. We had a pretty good run going down the front stretch and I was able to break his momentum a little bit and then we were able to get a run coming off of four once again the next lap. I just had to push it off in there. We're all here to win, so you have to use up as much space as you can."

After multiple cautions, the lap 30 restart saw Golobic take advantage of Thomas's disadvantage, sliding him for the second spot into turn one. Meanwhile, Thorson checked out to a half-straightaway lead and held strong.

The battle for third heated up with Thomas and Bacon exchanging slide jobs at opposite ends of the track on five consecutive occasions from laps 35 to 37 until a caution set up a three-lap sprint to the finish. With the number of sliders that were thrown by Thorson himself during the race, he wasn't going to allow himself to be the slidee this time as he entered through the middle of turn one before sliding up to the cushion, thus preventing Golobic from having a clean look.

"You don't want anybody to get the leading edge on you by getting to the bottom and throwing a slider like the one I used to get by Tyler," Thorson explained. "I was kind of cheating the entry and sliding myself. The cushion got kind of hard to run coming off turn two. There was nothing there and, all of a sudden, it showed up. It definitely helped entering a little bit below there and we were able to get a run going down the straightaway without my front end getting all twisted up. It was something I had to do just for my mind, so I didn't get up over the cushion. I knew there were only a few laps left and I was trying my hardest not to mess up. I did the same thing with turns three and four. The cushion started to move over farther and farther. That made it harder and harder to run. I had to do play a little defense, be patient and be really particular on how I ran the top."

Thorson cemented his position at the front while the battle raged on for second. Brady Bacon advanced from fourth to second past Thomas and Golobic in a rapid-fire, furious charge while Thomas found a second wind in the engine to get third back from Golobic on the final lap.

None of that action concerned Thorson, though, as he nailed down his 11th career USAC National Midget victory over Bacon, Thomas, Shane Golobic and Christopher Bell.

Runner-up Brady Bacon of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma cherished each opportunity the restarts presented in his FMR Racing/Brown & Miller Racing Solutions – Black Watch Farms/Beast/Toyota, helping him to his third consecutive top-two finish in USAC National competition over the last four days.

"All the restarts at the end helped," Bacon admits. "Everyone was getting a little tighter and tighter on the top and I was trying the bottom in one and two because I knew they were going to start sliding each other on the restarts or get tight. I knew I could be on a clear lane by myself down at the bottom. It just kept working better and better and better. The bottom in three kept getting cleaner so I could slide further. If it wasn't for those yellows at the end, it would've been pretty hard for me to pass."

Collinsville, Oklahoma's Tyler Thomas led 24 laps and earned a solid third-place finish in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota. Yet, unlike his counterpart Brady Bacon, Thomas didn't see much personal benefit with the cautions.

"That last late restart really hurt me," Thomas acknowledges. "I knew Brady was quick. He made the bottom work, but to get (Brady or Shane), I just had to wait for them to screw up. When they both went to the bottom in turn one, that opened up a door for me to get a run and I was able to get around Shane in three and four on the last lap."

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: August 1, 2017 – Jefferson County Speedway – Fairbury, Nebraska – Riverside Chevrolet Tuesday Night Thunder Presented by Westin Packaged Meats & Schmidt's Sanitation

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-11.105 (New Track Record); 2. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-11.149; 3. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-11.155; 4. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.305; 5. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-11.344; 6. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-11.432; 7. Christopher Bell, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.457; 8. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.475; 9. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-11.508; 10. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.528; 11. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.528; 12. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.577; 13. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 27, Klaasmeyer-11.625; 14. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-11.633; 15. Chett Gehrke, 11c, Matteson-11.647; 16. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-11.817; 17. Paul Babich, 69, Hamilton/Halarr-11.913; 18. John Klabunde, 77J, Klabunde-11.948; 19. Clinton Boyles, 98, Boyles-12.050; 20. Troy Simpson, 7, Hamilton-12.055; 21. Tyler Nelson, 47, Mason-12.056; 22. Joe B. Miller, 7u, Trifecta-12.085; 23. Lance Bennett, 10, Bennett-12.100; 24. Jeff Stasa, 91s, SBR-12.126; 25. Collin Rinehart, 20, Rinehart-12.205; 26. Bob Harr, 2, Hamilton/Halarr-12.214; 27. Matt Johnson, 85,

Central-12.254; 28. Glenn Waterland, 11cw, Waterland-12.668; 29. Terry Goodwin, 2G, Goodwin-12.719; 30. Ryan Oerter, 43, RKO-12.759; 31. Randy Oerter, 48, RKO-13.116; 32. Ashley Oerter, 16, RKO-14.038; 33. Jeff Crook, 5J, Crook-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 2. Tyler Thomas, 3. Chad Boat, 4. Tyler Courtney, 5. Tyler Nelson, 6. Paul Babich, 7. Collin Rinehart, 8. Terry Goodwin. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Jerry Coons Jr., 2. Shane Golobic, 3. Justin Grant, 4. Ryan Robinson, 5. Bob Harr, 6. John Klabunde, 7. Joe B. Miller, 8. Ryan Oerter. NT

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Christopher Bell, 2. Brady Bacon, 3. Holly Shelton, 4. Clinton Boyles, 5. Chett Gehrke, 6. Matt Johnson, 7. Randy Oerter. 2:00.16 (New Track Record)

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tanner Thorson, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Tanner Carrick, 4. Brayton Lynch, 5. Jeff Stasa, 6. Troy Simpson, 7. Glenn Waterland, 8. Ashley Oerter. NT

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Chett Gehrke, 2. Joe B. Miller, 3. Tyler Nelson, 4. Paul Babich, 5. Bob Harr, 6. Jeff Stasa, 7. John Klabunde, 8. Troy Simpson, 9. Terry Goodwin, 10. Glenn Waterland, 11. Randy Oerter, 12. Collin Rinehart, 13. Ashley Oerter, 14. Matt Johnson, 15. Ryan Oerter. NT

FEATURE: (40 laps) 1. Tanner Thorson, 2. Brady Bacon, 3. Tyler Thomas, 4. Shane Golobic, 5. Christopher Bell, 6. Spencer Bayston, 7. Tyler Courtney, 8. Jerry Coons Jr., 9. Ryan Robinson, 10. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 11. Chad Boat, 12. Holly Shelton, 13. Tanner Carrick, 14. Joe B. Miller, 15. Clinton Boyles, 16. Brayton Lynch, 17. Chett Gehrke, 18. Paul Babich, 19. Jeff Stasa, 20. John Klabunde, 21. Tyler Nelson, 22. Justin Grant. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-24 Tyler Thomas, Laps 25-40 Tanner Thorson.

****Bob Harr flipped as he crossed the finish line during the semi.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-833, 2-Brady Bacon-819, 3-Shane Golobic-819, 4-Tyler Courtney-775, 5-Justin Grant-750, 6-Tanner Thorson-720, 7-Jerry Coons Jr.-646, 8-Chad Boat-561, 9-Tyler Thomas-548, 10-Ryan Robinson-535.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: August 2, 2017 – Solomon Valley Raceway – Beloit, Kansas – 8th Annual Chad McDaniel Memorial

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Chad Boat (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Tucker Klaasmeyer (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Jerry Coons Jr. (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Christopher Bell (Chalk Stix 3rd Heat Winner)

Tanner Thorson (Indy Race Parts 4th Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Jerry Coons Jr. (14th to 8th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Tanner Carrick

=====

Bell Capitalizes to Win Second Chad McDaniel Memorial in Beloit

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Beloit, Kansas.....Rarely do we have the opportunity to accurately measure the accomplishments of racers in the midst of their careers to those who came before them. After all, that's what record books are for. But, when you join a name such as A.J. Foyt in any record book, it's certainly something worth mentioning.

Bell did just that Wednesday night in the 8th Annual Chad McDaniel Memorial at Solomon Valley Raceway where he recorded his 20th career USAC National Midget feature victory, equaling the number of wins the four-time Indianapolis 500 champ procured with the series in his legendary career.

Yet, after seeing his one-lap track record fall earlier in the night, Bell more than made up from having his name erased from that segment of the record book by leading the final ten laps to join Bryan Clauson as the only two-time winner of the Chad McDaniel Memorial.

However, the 2013 event winner from Norman, Oklahoma would quickly point out that he was not the one to beat on this night, inheriting the lead after Tyler Thomas' front end collapsed while leading exiting the second turn on lap 21 of the 30-lap event.

"The best driver didn't win tonight, that's for sure," Bell said. "Tyler was doing a great job up there on the top. I could see he was struggling just like we were. I just wasn't sure if he was going to be able to hang on for 30 laps. As it turned out, it was his car that couldn't hang on for 30 laps. That was such a tough break for him."

With that said, to inherit, you must first put yourself in position to grab opportunities when they arrive. Bell led in two separate stints, initially taking the lead between laps 7-14 before Thomas reclaimed the lead with a turn one slider on the 15th lap.

As Thomas began to extend his lead entering the final ten-lap stretch, his night would unexpectedly and heartbreakingly end when he began to slow dramatically with the front wheels as cockeyed as Marty Feldman's eyes. It was a cruel twist of fate for the Oklahoman who, one night earlier, lost his lead late after leading the majority of the laps at Fairbury, Nebraska's Jefferson County Speedway.

The shakeup moved Bell to the front and Justin Grant to second after he scurried back to the front following a drop to fifth in the opening stages.

On the restart, though, Bell erased any notion Grant had of victory on this night, quickly distancing himself from the USAC AMSOIL National Sprint Car point leader in the final laps to score his third series win of the season in his Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/DeWalt – TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

The feature wasn't all smooth sailing for the 2013 USAC National Midget champion who was routinely seen bouncing through the turns as he manhandled his ride atop the quarter-mile dirt oval.

"It was a tough, technical track tonight and that made it hard to run consistent laps," Bell explained. "My biggest thing was that I had to lift down the straightaway to make sure the car wasn't squatted. I had to have the car up so that it could glide across the holes and then find the smoothest part of the racetrack to get through."

On paper, it appears Justin Grant had a fairly smooth run to second from third, but after dropping back early on before making a late surge, his race was anything but in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Priority Aviation/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

"I just tried to not get in a panic and, instead, let the racetrack come to us," Grant said. "Our car was really good at the end and we started clicking back by guys and working the bottom lane while other guys were bouncing around the top. We really felt like we had something for Bell until that last caution."

On off weekends, third-place finisher Holly Shelton travels back home to her native California and competes in an Outlaw Kart at Cycleland Speedway in Oroville. Last weekend, she won her second race there in four attempts before starting this four-race if five-night midget swing in the Heartland. While the differences between each of the cars are stark, Shelton admits that despite the differences, driving (and winning) in a variety of racecars simply makes you tougher to beat each time you get behind the wheel.

"An Outlaw Kart has no power steering and no shocks; they're really low to the ground and your feet are hanging over the front tires," Shelton detailed. "The first couple times I went from that to a midget, I struggled a bit. Whatever car you're in, you should be able to adapt. Running the different cars just makes you a better driver."

With the series at such a high-level right now and the competition so even amongst at least half the field each night, every little bit of an advantage a team can find does help. Shelton was the first to bring down the existing one-lap track record Wednesday night, ultimately timing in third, which guaranteed her a prime starting spot in the top few rows for the feature in her Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/Black & Decker - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

"Qualifying is key in this series," Shelton acknowledged. "The competition's so stout, if you have to start mid-pack, it makes it really difficult on you. I learned that last night (at Fairbury, Neb.). I started 11th and really couldn't get past them. Tonight, it was really major, and we were able to take full advantage of a good qualifying run."

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: August 2, 2017 – Solomon Valley Raceway – Beloit, Kansas – 8th Annual Chad McDaniel Memorial

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-12.319 (New Track Record), 2. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.334, 3. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.451, 4. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-12.588, 5. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-12.599, 6. Tyler Thomas, 91T, Thomas-12.602, 7. Christopher Bell, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.616, 8. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.641, 9. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.671, 10. Tyler Nelson, 47, Mason-12.689, 11. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-12.696, 12. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-12.780, 13. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.784; 14. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-12.789; 15. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 27, Klaasmeyer-12.814; 16. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-12.897; 17. Cody Brewer, 96, Central-13.074; 18. Matt Johnson, 85, Central-13.150; 19. Chett Gehrke, 11c, Matteson-13.159; 20. Paul Babich, 69, Hamilton/Halarr-13.173; 21. Joe B. Miller, 7u, Trifecta-13.207; 22. Terry Goodwin, 2G, Goodwin-13.331; 23. Jeff Stasa, 91s, SBR-13.368; 24. Troy Simpson, 7, Hamilton-13.371; 25. Shaun Shapel, 84s, Shapel-13.479; 26. Collin Rinehart, 20, Rinehart-13.611; 27. Glenn Waterland, 11cw, Waterland-13.658; 28. Ryan Oerter, 43, RKO-13.752; 29. Randy Oerter, 48, RKO-14.318; 30. Ashley Oerter, 16, RKO-15.681.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Cody Brewer, 2. Joe B. Miller, 3. Brady Bacon, 4. Ryan Robinson, 5. Spencer Bayston, 6. Brayton Lynch, 7. Shaun Shapel, 8. Randy Oerter. 2:13.75

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Tyler Thomas, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Tyler Nelson, 5. Terry Goodwin, 6. Matt Johnson, 7. Collin Rinehart, 8. Ashley Oerter. NT

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 3. Christopher Bell, 4. Holly Shelton, 5. Jeff Stasa, 6. Chett Gehrke, 7. Glenn Waterland. NT

INDY RACE PARTS FOURTH HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Jerry Coons Jr., 2. Justin Grant, 3. Chad Boat, 4. Tanner Carrick, 5. Troy Simpson, 6. Paul Babich, 7. Ryan Oerter. 2:12.14

SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Brayton Lynch, 3. Matt Johnson, 4. Chett Gehrke, 5. Paul Babich, 6. Troy Simpson, 7. Collin Rinehart, 8. Ryan Oerter, 9. Jeff Stasa, 10. Shaun Shapel, 11. Glenn Waterland, 12. Terry Goodwin, 13. Randy Oerter, 14. Ashley Oerter. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Christopher Bell, 2. Justin Grant, 3. Holly Shelton, 4. Tanner Thorson, 5. Brady Bacon, 6. Spencer Bayston, 7. Brayton Lynch, 8. Tanner Carrick, 9. Shane Golobic, 10. Jerry Coons Jr., 11. Chad Boat, 12. Tyler Nelson, 13. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 14. Joe B. Miller, 15. Troy Simpson, 16. Tyler Thomas, 17. Tyler Courtney, 18. Chett Gehrke, 19. Ryan Robinson, 20. Matt Johnson, 21. Cody Brewer, 22. Paul Babich. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-6 Tyler Thomas, Laps 7-14 Christopher Bell, Laps 15-20 Tyler Thomas, Laps 21-30 Christopher Bell.

****Tyler Courtney flipped on lap 14 of the feature.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-892, 2-Brady Bacon-889, 3-Shane Golobic-873, 4-Justin Grant-827, 5-Tyler Courtney-812, 6-Tanner Thorson-792, 7-Jerry Coons Jr.-697, 8-Chad Boat-608, 9-Holly Shelton-594, 10-Tyler Thomas-587.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACES: August 4-5, 2017 – Belleville High Banks – Belleville, Kansas – 40th Belleville Midget Nationals

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Brady Bacon (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Cody Brewer (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Shane Golobic (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Tyler Courtney (Chalk Stix 3rd Heat Winner)

Jerry Coons Jr. (Indy Race Parts 4th Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Joe B. Miller (21st to 14th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Tucker Klaasmeyer

=====

Three in a Row! Boat Wins Opener at Belleville

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Belleville, Kansas.....Every once in a while, a team discovers the perfect combination: the right driver, the right car, the right setup and the right track, all at the right time.

Friday night, Chad Boat and the Tucker/Boat Motorsports crew were all in unison as they pulled down a tried and true, war-tested machine from the shelf to win their third consecutive feature at the “Belleville Midget Nationals,” something only Stan Fox had accomplished in the 40-year history of the prestigious event back in 1979 and 1980.

After an up-and-down, inconsistent season leading up to this week’s races, the team made the decision to return to the same Spike chassis that was driven to a sweep by Boat a season ago at Belleville. It’s a car that hadn’t made a single appearance during the 2017 season before Friday night but now stands an undefeated 3-for-3 on the Belleville High Banks.

“We ran it at the end of last year a couple places,” Boat recalls. “It’s not perfect. It seems to be very temperamental, but it seems to really like Belleville, so I guess we’ll keep bringing it here.”

Despite being hooked up all night from the first time the PristineAuction.com – K & C Drywall/Spike/Speedway Toyota hit the track, the night wasn’t all chicken and stars. A persistent fault with the engine dogged the team throughout the night, forcing them to abort their hot lap session early with a head gasket issue as water pushed out from underneath the hood.

“The engine was tightening up and slowing down,” Boat recalls. “You can feel that in the car, especially here when they start to go. That’s obviously not ideal, but we do have great engines. We just had a little issue all night with this one. We knew it could be a problem in the feature, but when it’s Belleville, you have to go for it.”

At 25 laps, Friday night’s feature is 15 laps shorter than the Saturday night finale, meaning more urgency and fewer opportunities to stake a claim at the front. Boat set his compass to the north and headed to the front on the opening lap, getting around both Holly Shelton and Brady Bacon who battled wheel-to-wheel on the opening circuit. On the second lap, Boat worked his way past Bacon, then Shelton for the lead and, from there, found comfort in the middle of a heavy racetrack where he began to breakaway to a full second lead by lap five.

“Usually on Friday night, the track is a little heavier and that makes gaining track position extremely tough,” Boat explains. “The start was going to be important and I knew I needed to get to the lead. Twenty-five laps don’t seem like much, but it’s still a long time around here. We were going to seek and find where we could run best. My car could go wherever, but the biggest thing was finding bite.”

By the 14th lap, USAC National Midget point leader Spencer Bayston began to track down Boat ever so slightly as he began his ascent on a goulash of lapped traffic. Boat arrived on the scene in turn one as Terry Goodwin and Jeff Stasa battled for position high and low. Boat split the two before sliding up the top to gain a little bit of distance between him and Bayston.

“It actually kind of worried me,” Boat remembers. “I didn’t really catch them in a great spot. I felt like I probably should’ve gone to the top. I felt like I did a terrible job getting through there, but I knew I needed not to slow down. Luckily, it was enough to get the lead.”

The moist racing surface started to widen out as the top line came in. Once the middle began to burn up, Bayston headed for the high road and began to make gains on Boat who shifted to the bottom, but on the 19th lap, fifth-running Bacon’s right rear tire expired atop the cushion between turns one and two, resulting in the night’s final caution period. That set up a seven-lap sprint to the finish without lapped traffic playing a role.

Remember the turmoil with the engine early in the night? Boat could feel the powerplant tightening up on him, forcing him to compensate to stay ahead of the game.

“Once the caution flew, I knew it was going to be a pretty green, open track,” Boat said. “I just knew I needed a good restart. I didn’t get a great one, though. It seemed like the engine stumbled and maybe something was wrong with it. I just drove it down into (turn) one, so he couldn’t slide me, and I was just kind of protecting. Once my engine slowed down, I knew I could move down the track because I would be able to keep the tires hooked up.”

“He was starting to run down the track a little bit more,” Bayston said. “The whole race, he’d been running up a little bit. I wasn’t sure if he was trying something new or trying to protect knowing I couldn’t really drive around the outside of him. On the final restart, I was hoping I could get to the inside of him in (turn) one. I got a good start, but he just took my line away from me. He’s a smart driver and did a good job there and that sealed it up for him.”

Bayston recovered from having his line stripped away from him and made a strong run at Boat in the final stretch, but to no avail as Boat drove to his third victory in a row on the half-mile high banks by a quarter of a second over Bayston, Tanner Thorson, Shelton and Justin Grant.

For the second-straight occasion, Lebanon, Indiana’s Bayston ran second to Boat at Belleville in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/IWX – Curb Records - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota. Bayston was behind the wheel of a brand-new car that provided a little more headroom, but was a typical, lightning fast Keith Kunz car.

“It’s a taller cage car,” Bayston explains. “It’s two inches taller in the back and an inch-and-a-half taller in the front just for safety purposes. This car was built recently in the last couple of weeks and we brought it here for the first time tonight. Obviously, it’s got some speed behind it and, as the night went on, we got a lot faster.”

Bayston’s teammate and defending USAC National Midget champion Tanner Thorson of Minden, Nevada set ProSource Fast Qualifying time to begin the night and took third in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

“I was pretty fast there toward the end of the race once the track slickened off a little bit,” Thorson admits. I struggled when the track was hooked up. We were pretty good everywhere except for the middle. I tried to go down there, but I didn’t have as much drive as those guys in front of me did. Starting in the third row made it tough tonight, but we were able to make up ground on the restarts. Those definitely helped me a lot and we were able to come away with a third tonight.”

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: August 4, 2017 – Belleville High Banks – Belleville, Kansas – 40th Belleville Midget Nationals

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-17.373; 2. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-17.390; 3. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-17.511; 4. Ryan Robinson, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-17.625; 5. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-17.627; 6. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-17.641; 7. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-17.663; 8. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-17.664; 9. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-17.689; 10. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-17.773; 11. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-17.780; 12. Jerry Coons Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-18.020; 13. Scott Hatton, 1, Hatton-18.144; 14. Jeff Stasa, 91s, SBR-18.286; 15. Matt Johnson, 85, Central-18.589; 16. Terry Goodwin, 2G, Goodwin-18.650; 17. Ryan Oerter, 43, RKO-19.266; 18. Collin Rinehart, 20, Rinehart-20.153; 19. Zach Middleton, 43A, RKO-20.182; 20. Robert Bell, 71½, Bell-20.662; 21. Ashley Oerter, 16, RKO-21.679; 22. Randy Oerter, 48, RKO-21.846; 23. Cody Brewer, 96, Central-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Justin Grant, 2. Tanner Thorson, 3. Tanner Carrick, 4. Ryan Robinson, 5. Scott Hatton, 6. Terry Goodwin, 7. Zach Middleton, 8. Randy Oerter. 2:21.20

COMPETITION SUSPENSION (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Brady Bacon, 3. Spencer Bayston, 4. Brayton Lynch, 5. Jeff Stasa, 6. Ryan Oerter, 7. Robert Bell. 2:23.14

BENIC ENTERPRISES/INDY RACE PARTS THIRD HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Chad Boat, 2. Jerry Coons Jr., 3. Holly Shelton, 4. Collin Rinehart, 5. Tyler Courtney, 6. Ashley Oerter. NT

FEATURE: (25 laps) 1. Chad Boat, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Holly Shelton, 5. Justin Grant, 6. Ryan Robinson, 7. Tyler Courtney, 8. Shane Golobic, 9. Brady Bacon, 10. Jerry Coons Jr., 11. Tanner Carrick, 12. Terry Goodwin, 13. Jeff Stasa, 14. Brayton Lynch, 15. Scott Hatton, 16. Robert Bell, 17. Matt Johnson, 18. Randy Oerter, 19. Ashley Oerter, 20. Zach Middleton, 21. Collin Rinehart, 22. Ryan Oerter. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Lap 1 Holly Shelton, Laps 2-25 Chad Boat.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-970, 2-Brady Bacon-944, 3-Shane Golobic-930, 4-Justin Grant-893, 5-Tanner Thorson-869, 6-Tyler Courtney-868, 7-Jerry Coons Jr.-747, 8-Chad Boat-690, 9-Holly Shelton-662, 10-Ryan Robinson-628.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: August 5, 2017 – Belleville, Kansas – Belleville High Banks – 40th Belleville Midget Nationals

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Tanner Thorson (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Justin Grant (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Shane Golobic (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Chad Boat (Chalk Stix/Indy Race Parts 3rd Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Tyler Courtney (22nd to 7th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Jeff Stasa

=====

Bayston Blazes the High Banks for First Belleville Victory

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Belleville, Kansas.....All year long, the focus for Spencer Bayston and the Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports team has been to win Belleville.

After running second to Chad Boat in the 2016 Saturday night finale, then again to Boat in this weekend's Friday prelim, the target was clear. It included pulling out all the stops, including a new, specially-built chassis designed to take on the Belleville High Banks.

After another weekend of Boat domination, the tide turned when Bayston established new 4-lap and 8-lap track records earlier Saturday, solidifying his position on the pole for the 40-lap main event by defeating Boat head-to-head in the 4-lap dash.

The stage was set for the Lebanon, Indiana native to rout the 24-car field in a stirring high-wire act up against the fence for 40-straight laps in the 40th annual event to capture his first "Belleville Midget Nationals" victory, a win that was 365 days in the making.

“We’ve been focused on Boat all year long,” Bayston said. “Knowing how good he was last year, we knew we had to be on our game coming into this weekend. We built this car especially for this place and we’ve been working hard all-yearlong to try to build up for this weekend. To bring it home on this night really means a lot.”

Right from the start, Bayston blazed a trail in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/IWX – Curb Records - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota that no other driver could keep pace with as he separated from Boat exiting turn two while teammate Tanner Thorson followed in tow, powering by Boat for second heading into turn three. By the third lap, Bayston’s advantage was a half-straightaway and, by lap 10, the lead was a full-straight.

Dissimilar from the night before, the track was wide and vast from lap one, up on the rail in classic Belleville style. Bayston stood on the loudpedal, never breaking stride as he threaded the needle through lapped traffic, slicing between Terry Goodwin and Scott Hatton in turn four on lap 15.

Just before halfway, all three Clauson Marshall Racing cars with drivers Shane Golobic, Tyler Courtney and Justin Grant saw right rear tires go down, putting into question the factor of tire wear in an intense 40-lap contest. Keeping the car as straight as possible up top was the key for Bayston.

“I knew going into it that we’d have to be somewhat careful with our tires,” Bayston explained. “Last year, this place wore down on left rears before it started to get cleaned off there up top. I was trying to pace myself and figure out what I need to be doing there. The higher you go, the faster you go here. I could lean on the cushion and keep the car as straight as possible and the wheel spin down.”

Conversely, second-running Thorson wasn’t as concerned, which he credits to the work his team does in addition to his growing experience behind the wheel of a stock car in races that are 200-300 laps in length in most cases.

“I wasn’t too worried,” Thorson admits. “I could kind of feel our tires. They’re really good and the way our guys groove these things and get them ready for us is pretty awesome. I was just hoping for some rubber there at the end. I’d say I’m a better rubber racer here than I am anything else. I hoped that, in the long run, we would have something to worry about with tire wear and I would’ve been able to save my stuff and been better at the end. It’s something you’ve got to look at with these longer races. It’s something that running stock cars has really helped me with.”

On the lap 23 restart, Thorson was finally able to stick with Bayston as the light switched green, shadowing his teammate up on the top side. Thorson remained in racing purgatory, not moving forward or backward as the laps wound down past the three-quarter mark while Thorson took on a bit of a conservation mode in hopes that the track would change in his favor near the conclusion.

“The race just kind of came to me,” Thorson explains. “I was trying to save my stuff a little bit toward the end. I saw the top was starting to get a little bit black. I was saving my stuff with the hope that if there’s rubber, we’d have a little bit more tire, but it didn’t work out that way. We had a couple of restarts and we were able to get close. Longer in that run, we got messed up with some lapped cars, but I don’t know if we were good enough to pass him. We were only good enough to hang with him for a little bit, but each time, he started to pull away a bit. I just felt like I wasn’t in the track as much as I was in the beginning part of the race. Maybe I should’ve attacked a little harder at the beginning.”

As the laps ticked inside ten to go, Bayston carved out another two-tenth increase over Thorson from 0.6 to 0.8 to 1.0 to 1.2 seconds over a four-lap span by lap 36 and appeared to be putting the finishing touches on a masterful performance. However, with two laps remaining, Terry Goodwin found himself skidding to a stop at the entry of turn one. Sixth-running Ryan Robinson entered turn one with nowhere to go and pitched his mount sideways in an attempt to avoid Goodwin, to no avail. Robinson’s right rear contacted the front left of Goodwin, sending Robinson end-over-end into turn one. Robinson climbed out of the car without serious injury.

That set up a two-lap dash to the finish. Under the red flag, Bayston was content with what he had. The car was on a rail, but he felt his teammate had something up his sleeve. Yet, Thorson felt the benefits of the red flag to his race were miniscule.

"I don't know if that red flag helped us at all," Thorson wonders. "I'm never good when it comes to restarts following red flags and yellow flags. I like to keep the green flag pace going. I'm not sure if our right rear tire sealed up or what, but we didn't have as much drive as we did just before that red flag."

A green-white-checkered finish is practically a two-lap qualifying run and Bayston was on the clock from the word 'go.' Incredibly, despite 38-lap old rubber and a track that had seen 38 laps of green flag action, Bayston ripped off his two fastest laps on lap 39 and 40 to seal the deal for the biggest win of his career.

"I ran the first few laps trying to get away and build a big lead," Bayston admits. "On that last red, I knew I really had to break away. For the whole race, I was maintaining, just being patient and smart. I got really comfortable and set it on cruise control, almost. Those last few laps, I was running as hard as I could and as fast as I could. Throughout the race, the car got better, and the crew had the thing absolutely spot on. That really tells you the type of team this is."

Bayston provided car owner Keith Kunz with his sixth Belleville Saturday night victory, following in the footsteps of drivers Page Jones (1993), Kevin Doty (1994), Kyle Larson (2011), Christopher Bell (2013), Rico Abreu (2014).

"You look into the past with guys like Larson, Bell and even guys that are in our pit area with us, like Jay Drake (a 1996 and 2000 prelim feature winner)," Bayston begins. "There's a long list of very talented drivers who've achieved big things. To put my name up there with those guys, it's a true honor."

Belleville has become a more comfortable place for Bayston since his 22nd place debut in 2015. Since then, the 18-yearold has scored successive finishes of 4th, 2nd, 2nd and 1st.

"It's a place you have to respect," Bayston laid out. "When I first came here, racing for Bryan Clauson, Kokomo is his place of worship, but this place was also special in his heart. He dominated here and, every time he came here, he was the one to beat. The first year here, we were just trying to get comfortable and didn't run too great. Last year, we were so close, and I got so much more comfortable throughout the feature. This year, coming in, I knew we had a really good shot at beating Chad. I have a lot of confidence in this team and the car that they've given me. We've been fast all year long and, to come here to this place, it really is a good feeling to know how fast we truly are."

Reigning USAC National Midget champion Tanner Thorson was knocking all around the podium both Friday and Saturday night in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota, following up Friday's third-place finish with a runner-up result in Saturday's finale.

"I'm not happy if I don't win," Thorson said point blank. "That's how it is. If I don't win, I'm not happy. We're all here to win and I think that shows how much drive our team has."

Chad Boat's streak of three consecutive Belleville wins ended with a third-place finish in his Tucker-Boat Motorsports/PristineAuction.com - K & C Drywall/Spike/Speedway Toyota. After swapping engines following Friday night's victory, Boat found the car to be just a tick off, which, at Belleville, can be the decisive factor in running first, second, third or tenth.

"It's a pretty fine line," Boat said. "If you're just a little off, it rears its head, especially in a 40-lapper. The track took us a little bit by surprise. It was a lot slicker last year and that's where we excelled. Our car was just a little bit too tight all night. I felt like I was just trying to hang on this year, but overall, the car performed pretty well all weekend. We tried to make a couple changes, but on that two-lap run, we knew it was going to be tough. Those guys were just a little better than we were. What we needed to change, we really couldn't change under a red."

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: August 5, 2017 – Belleville High Banks – Belleville, Kansas – 40th Belleville Midget Nationals

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Chad Boat (#84 Tucker-Boat), 2. Ryan Robinson (#21 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 3. Tyler Courtney (#7BC Clauson Marshall), 4. Jeff Stasa (#91 SBR), 5. Terry Goodwin (#2G Goodwin), 6. Robert Bell (#71½ Bell), 7. Ashley Oerter (#16 RKO), 8. Ryan Oerter (#43 RKO). NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston (#97 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 2. Tanner Carrick (#71K Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 3. Shane Golobic (#17w Clauson Marshall/Wood), 4. Justin Grant (#39BC Clauson Marshall), 5. Brayton Lynch (#1K RKR), 6. Zach Middleton (#43A RKO), 7. Cody Brewer (#96 Central). 2:17.56 (New Track Record)

CHALK STIX/INDY RACE PARTS THIRD HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Jerry Coons Jr. (#25 Petry-Goff), 2. Tanner Thorson (#67 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 3. Brady Bacon (#76m FMR), 4. Holly Shelton (#67K Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 5. Scott Hatton (#1 Hatton), 6. Ty Williams (#91s SBR), 7. Collin Rinehart (#20 Rinehart), 8. Randy Oerter (#48 RKO). 2:22.26

POLE DASH: (4 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Chad Boat, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Ryan Robinson, 5. Jerry Coons Jr., 6. Tanner Carrick. 1:08.98 (New Track Record)

B-DASH: (4 laps) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Tyler Courtney, 3. Justin Grant, 4. Brady Bacon, 5. Holly Shelton, 6. Jeff Stasa. 1:10.80

FEATURE: (40 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Tanner Thorson, 3. Chad Boat, 4. Jerry Coons Jr., 5. Brady Bacon, 6. Holly Shelton, 7. Justin Grant, 8. Tanner Carrick, 9. Shane Golobic, 10. Ryan Robinson, 11. Jeff Stasa, 12. Terry Goodwin, 13. Tyler Courtney, 14. Robert Bell, 15. Scott Hatton, 16. Collin Rinehart, 17. Brayton Lynch, 18. Ryan Oerter, 19. Matt Johnson (#85 Central), 20. Zach Middleton, 21. Randy Oerter, 22. Ty Williams, 23. Ashley Oerter, 24. Cody Brewer. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-40 Spencer Bayston.

****Ryan Robinson flipped on lap 39 of the feature.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-1040, 2-Brady Bacon-1002, 3-Shane Golobic-976, 4-Justin Grant-945, 5-Tanner Thorson-936, 6-Tyler Courtney-905, 7-Jerry Coons Jr.-808, 8-Chad Boat-754, 9-Holly Shelton-717, 10-Ryan Robinson-671.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: August 13, 2017 – Susquehanna Speedway – York Haven, Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania Midget Week

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Chad Boat (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Spencer Bayston (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Jerry Coons Jr. (Chalk Stix/Indy Race Parts 3rd Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Brady Bacon (10th to 5th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Tyler Courtney

=====

Grant Larceny in PA Midget Week Opener at Susky

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

York Haven, Pennsylvania.....The old saying goes, “sometimes you’d rather be lucky than good.” That’s true to an extent, but the fact of the matter is that one must first put themselves in a position for good fortune to fall their way.

Justin Grant was in that position on the final lap of Sunday night’s “Pennsylvania Midget Week” opener at Susquehanna Speedway when he passed not one, but two of Keith Kunz’s bunch, to win from third on the final corner of the last lap to score his second USAC Midget National Championship victory of the season aboard the Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives - Priority Aviation/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

In fact, with just five laps remaining, Grant was running a mere fifth behind Tanner Thorson, Spencer Bayston, Brady Bacon and teammate Shane Golobic. Grant took advantage of fortuitous opportunities to the front, getting by Golobic with four to go, then advancing another spot to third when third-running Bacon slowed to a stop with a broken U-Joint with two laps remaining. Bacon had been the dominant driver throughout the mid-portion of the 30-lap feature, leading the ensuing 17 laps after snaring the lead from Thorson on lap six and held a nearly two second advantage with 13 laps remaining.

The race appeared it would be settled between reigning series champ Thorson and current point leader Spencer Bayston on the first attempt at a green-white-checkered while Grant lurked in third. As soon as the green flag dropped, Thorson got a solid jump while Grant put a move underneath Bayston for second, which would prove to be a harbinger of things to come.

Yet, the car of 15th running Jim Radney stalled on the front straightaway, negating the start and moved everyone back into single-file order for a second attempt with Thorson, Bayston and Grant running one-two-three at the head of the class.

Though Grant was able to pull even with Bayston during the initial restart, he admits he bobbled pretty bad off the second turn. He knew if he had one more shot, if he could hit it right, it was going to work out pretty well for him.

Right off the bat, Bayston put his own plan into fruition, sliding Thorson for the lead in turn one on lap 29. Thorson attempted to counter with a run into turn three to no avail as Bayston used the momentum from the high line to remain in front with the white flag in the air.

“On restarts like that, the guy not leading has the advantage, which was me,” Bayston believes. “I kind of knew what Tanner was going to do and I knew if I could get a good restart, I could at least get in front of Tanner and break his momentum. If I didn’t get a good restart, I knew he’d have track position and it would be tough to beat him.”

As soon as it looked as if Bayston appeared to secure the spot, on the final lap, Thorson fought back to pull alongside Bayston midway through the back straightaway while, suddenly, Grant made a play to the far bottom and the trio were three-wide briefly before heading into three.

Both Bayston and Thorson slid side-by-side into the corner, never lifting, but both stumbled atop the cushion, allowing Grant to dart underneath both off turn four to win his first USAC National Midget feature since the season opening “Shamrock Classic” at the Southern Illinois Center in March. Thorson also slipped past Bayston off the final corner to take second while Bayston dropped to third ahead of Golobic and Tanner Carrick.

“I thought we could at least get one of them there on that restart, but I wasn’t sure about both of them,” Grant admits. “After Bayston threw the slider into three, I kind of figured, ‘Well, we’re going to end up second, maybe third.’ I got Thorson and said, ‘Okay, at least we’re going to have second.’ Then, Bayston had a big bicycle and I thought ‘Holy cow,’ I think we’re

going to win this thing!' I was just hoping that he kept it going and a caution or red didn't come out and we'd have to do it all over again and fend them off another time or give the spot back to Thorson, but, luckily, it all worked out."

"I'd been getting a good run off the bottom of (turn) two, especially late in the race," Grant continued. "I got up alongside those guys off two and almost was in a position to slide them both into three, but not quite. Bayston ran the big slider block on Thorson and I was able to slide past Thorson getting into the middle of the corner and he kind of got messed up on the cushion right as we were getting there. Bayston had so much speed sliding across the middle from blocking the slider that he hit the curb and bicycled and we were able to skate on through there unscathed."

While Grant's midget season hasn't been a disappointment by any means, the consistent strong runs just haven't translated into as many wins as he's had during his 2017 USAC AMSOIL National Sprint Car campaign where he owns the point lead and four wins. The pressure can mount in such situations for any driver with the competitive nature that Grant possesses, but the 26-year-old feels he's in the right spot now with the right team.

"Sometimes, if you can't be the best guy, you've got to be the luckiest," Grant quips. "You have to be in the right spot to win them and, tonight, it worked out in our favor. We were good enough to capitalize on their mistake and that's what you've got to do sometimes. I've been running well, but I just haven't gotten a win in a few months. Running second, third, fourth and fifth, that's good and all, but it really starts to wear on you after a while, especially when you start out the year so strong and then kind of taper off. I put a lot of pressure on myself to win, but this team's really great. They let you do what you can do, and they want to win, but they're not breathing down your back and that makes it a lot easier to do your job. Across the board, all the people I race with are that way and it makes it really fun and easier to do your job, for sure."

Minden, Nevada's Tanner Thorson appeared to be the dominant driver when the final caution occurred with two laps remaining, leading two different stints of the 30-lap feature in the opening and latter stages for a total of 11 laps before finishing second in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota. Yet, to him, leading on a late-race restart was not the ideal place to be.

"It's a pretty big disadvantage," Thorson readily admits. "You're kind of a sitting duck there. When you're committed to running one line and that's it, you don't know exactly where everybody's going to go on the restart, what's going to work and what's not going to work. It's a situation I'd have rather been sitting in the second or third spot like Spencer and Justin. Spencer and I are teammates, but we're both here to win and we're going to do it what it takes to get it done. I wouldn't say we were worse than Justin or Justin was better than us, but I'd definitely say Spencer and I we're both pretty dominant throughout the whole race."

"It was a matter of three cars going into one turn and none of us were lifting," Thorson said of the final lap battle between he and Bayston. "We're all here to win and we're all going to do what it takes to win. I wasn't lifting, Spencer wasn't lifting for me and I wasn't lifting for Justin. Justin was on the line to be in and it definitely showed right there. It was a little bit slick through turn three. Our cars took off like rockets and gained some speed getting into the corner, which made matters a little worse and sent us hopping the cushion. I was able to get the car turned back down, get going and managed to get second. Can't be too mad about that. We just got beat."

Just eight days following his masterful performance on the Belleville High Banks, Lebanon, Indiana's Spencer Bayston came within one corner of becoming the season's fourth different repeat winner in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/IWX - Curb Records - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

"Neither Tanner nor I wanted to lose, so we both drove it in deep," Bayston said. "I drove it in really deep and got up over the cushion and biked it up a little bit. Grant was there at the right time and just stole it from us. Both Tanner and I wanted to win really badly. I think both of our cars were better than the rest of the field's. it's kind of unfortunate the way it ended up."

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP & EASTERN REGIONAL MIDGETS PRESENTED BY ARDC RACE RESULTS: August 13, 2017 – Susquehanna Speedway – York Haven, Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-17.713; 2. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-17.998; 3. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-18.050; 4. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-18.137; 5. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-18.142; 6. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-18.164; 7. Trevor Kobylarz, 14, RT-18.169; 8. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-18.259; 9. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-18.323; 10. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-18.364; 11. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-18.450; 12. Jim Radney, 95, Radney-18.486; 13. Steve Buckwalter, 74, Speers-18.496; 14. Adam Pierson, 76E, Mancini-18.587; 15. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-18.643; 16. Tommy Kunsman, 21, Kunsman-18.676; 17. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-18.693; 18. Brett Arndt, 46, Essay-18.802; 19. P.J. Gargiulo, 5, JHG-18.886; 20. Kenney Johnson, 46x, Johnson-18.913; 21. Kenny Miller III, 23m, Miller-18.938; 22. Landon Simon, 29, Clover-18.939; 23. Andrew Layser, 77L, Bright-19.136; 24. Jimmy Glenn, 07, Glenn-19.377; 25. Josh Heckman, 12, Heckman-19.390; 26. Rob Marhefka, 99, FM-20.259; 27. Jason Rice, 57, Rice-NT; 28. Shawn Jackson, 7J, Jackson-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Tommy Kunsman, 3. Trevor Kobylarz, 4. Spencer Bayston, 5. Steve Buckwalter, 6. P.J. Gargiulo, 7. Brayton Lynch, 8. Shawn Jackson, 9. Landon Simon, 10. Josh Heckman. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Brady Bacon, 2. Alex Bright, 3. Justin Grant, 4. Chad Boat, 5. Tanner Carrick, 6. Adam Pierson, 7. Kenney Johnson, 8. Andrew Layser, 9. Rob Marhefka. NT

CHALK STIX THIRD HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Tanner Thorson, 2. Holly Shelton, 3. Shane Golobic, 4. Brett Arndt, 5. Ryan Greth, 6. Kenny Miller III, 7. Jim Radney, 8. Jimmy Glenn. NT

INDY RACE PARTS SEMI: (12 laps) 1. Adam Pierson, 2. Brayton Lynch, 3. Jim Radney, 4. P.J. Gargiulo, 5. Kenny Miller III, 6. Andrew Layser, 7. Landon Simon, 8. Jimmy Glenn, 9. Kenney Johnson, 10. Shawn Jackson, 11. Josh Heckman, 12. Rob Marhefka. 3:45.25

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Justin Grant, 2. Tanner Thorson, 3. Spencer Bayston, 4. Shane Golobic, 5. Tanner Carrick, 6. Chad Boat, 7. Alex Bright, 8. Holly Shelton, 9. Brett Arndt, 10. Trevor Kobylarz, 11. Adam Pierson, 12. Kenny Miller III, 13. Brayton Lynch, 14. Andrew Layser, 15. Tyler Courtney, 16. Brady Bacon, 17. Jim Radney, 18. Steve Buckwalter, 19. Kenney Johnson, 20. Landon Simon, 21. P.J. Gargiulo, 22. Tommy Kunsman, 23. Ryan Greth. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-5 Tanner Thorson, Laps 6-22 Brady Bacon, Laps 23-28 Tanner Thorson, Lap 29 Spencer Bayston, Lap 30 Justin Grant.

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-1112, 2-Shane Golobic-1047, 3-Brady Bacon-1043, 4-Justin Grant-1026, 5-Tanner Thorson-1012, 6-Tyler Courtney-952, 7-Chad Boat-814, 8-Jerry Coons Jr.-808, 9-Holly Shelton-773, 10-Tanner Carrick-690.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: August 14, 2017 – Path Valley Speedway Park – Spring Run, Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania Midget Week

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Tyler Courtney (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Tyler Courtney (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Brady Bacon (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Tanner Thorson (Chalk Stix 3rd Heat Winner)

Adam Pierson (Indy Race Parts Semi Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Tanner Carrick (14th to 5th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Brayton Lynch

=====

Boat Escapes Troubled Waters for Path Valley Score

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Spring Run, Pennsylvania.....The path to victory lane was certainly not a linear line for Chad Boat in Monday's second night of "Pennsylvania Midget Week" at Path Valley Speedway Park.

The topsy-turvy 30-lap feature saw its share of lead changes, sliders, beating, banging and hot tempers that concluded with Boat using a turn one slide job on Tyler Courtney coming to the white flag on a late-race green-white-checkered situation to win his second USAC National Midget feature in a span of 11 days.

Like Justin Grant one night earlier, Boat managed to stay clean, avoid trouble and, thus, put himself in a position to pounce when things went awry in front of him during the closing laps.

"The top-seven or eight of us are so close in speed, any of us can win on any given night," Boat acknowledges. "When other guys have misfortune, you have to capitalize. When you put yourself in a position to win races, you'll have nights like tonight, or you might have a night like Belleville when you lead all 25 laps. It all seems to even out over the course of a year."

Boat began the main event from the fifth position and settled into a groove just inside the top-five for the first several circuits while series rookie Brayton Lynch took off from the pole to lead the first nine.

Meanwhile, on the sixth lap, Tanner Thorson and Tyler Courtney battled for second when, suddenly, Courtney found himself in a half-spin in turn four, dropping him from third to 12th while Bacon slipped by Thorson for second.

On the tenth lap, Thorson diamonded off the turn two cushion, diving low and blasting past both Bacon and Lynch in one fell swoop to take the race lead entering turn three.

Once the leaders began working lapped traffic with 13 laps remaining, that's when things began to get dicey among the front runners and would remain that way throughout the rest of the feature. Bacon closed to within a single car length of Thorson during the following pair of laps and, on lap 20, Thorson chose the low groove for his line of work around Shawn Jackson entering turn three while Bacon was clear and free up top. Thorson showed Jackson a nose and was able to get completely underneath Jackson exiting turn four. Bacon had the momentum up top and was set to make a charge at Thorson on the front straight when Bacon and Jackson made contact, sending Jackson into a spin entering turn one to bring out the yellow flag.

On the ensuing restart, Thorson instantly broke away, yet Bacon was intent on reeling him back in as soon as it was humanly possible. The two repeatedly swapped the lead back-and-forth, using slide-job after slide-job to overtake each other on each end of the quarter-mile.

With five to go, Bacon slid Thorson on the bottom entering the third turn. The two continued side-by-side through the corner just inches apart when Bacon's car became sideways, slowing yet still rolling forward atop the fourth turn cushion, giving fourth-running Spencer Bayston nowhere to go. The series point leader ramped over Bacon's left rear wheel, sending him flipping twice down the banking. Bacon would restart after taking his car to the work area and returned to finish ninth. Bayston exited the race with a 19th place finish and was uninjured in the incident.

Thorson found himself in a similar position as he did one night prior at Susquehanna – leading the pack on a late-race restart. Thorson opted for the high line in turns one and two and the bottom in three and four with Courtney close behind.

Coming to the checkered flag, Courtney took one last shot in the final set of turns and dove to the bottom of turn three underneath Thorson. The two made contact, sending Thorson into a 360 spin in the middle of the fourth turn. Third running Boat was hard on the binders, just narrowly missing Thorson by the width of a credit card. Previous night's "Pennsylvania Midget Week" opener winner Justin Grant ran into the melee after smacking into the back of Boat and went flipping near the turn four wall. He exited the car without injury.

Boat, who just a week-and-a-half ago, was a "Belleville Midget Nationals" night one winner, had stayed relatively unscathed throughout the feature up to that point, but the Phoenix, Arizona native had to take evasive action to avoid this particular melee as it played out.

"I was hard on the brakes trying to avoid Tanner," Boat recalls. "I saw him spinning and he was on the gas. I knew it was going to be close, but I just whoa'd up and, luckily, the way it worked out, I was able to barely miss it. Sometimes, when it's your night, it's your night."

Courtney now led with Boat trailing just behind as the two set up for the green-white-checkered finish. Courtney stumbled on the turn one cushion when racing resumed, allowing Boat's slider to easily clear Courtney. Courtney made a run back at Boat entering the third turn but wasn't close enough to make anything stick. Boat split away from Courtney on the final lap to win by a quarter of a second over Courtney, Ryan Greth, Holly Shelton and Brayton Lynch.

Though Boat ran near or in the top-five for much of the event, he was one of few who managed to avoid all the catastrophes that befell most of the frontrunners to win his fifth career USAC National Midget victory in his Tucker-Boat Motorsports/PristineAuction.com – K & C Drywall/Spike/Speedway Toyota. In fact, all five of his career wins in the series have now come in the month of August over the past two seasons, but this was one "Mr. August" had to work for after standing all the way back in sixth with a mere five laps to go.

"Our car was really good all throughout the feature. Early on, we kind of got used up and fell back. I had to put my nose down and get digging. For a while there, I thought we were going to run fifth or sixth with a car capable of winning. But on that run with five to go after Spencer's crash, I really got the middle working in (turns) one and two. I just had to find a place to run in three and four. I knew where I wanted to go when I was working on getting by Justin (Grant)."

It was an eventful evening for Indianapolis, Indiana's Tyler Courtney who ran up front early before falling to 12th, then worked his way back to the front and the lead for the final restart, only to see the race slip from his fingers coming to the white flag in his Clauson Marshall Racing/Driven 2 Save Lives – Indiana Donor Network/Spike/Stanton SR-11.

"I should've gone in a car-width lower than I did. I just had a brain fart there," Courtney admitted. "I feel bad for my guys because they busted their tails all night. We had to change a steering gear after the heat race, and they got me out just in time to roll off for the feature. I drove my butt off to get us back up there in a position to win the race and I gave it away. That's all there is too it. I messed up."

USAC/ARDC Midget point leader Ryan Greth earned a career-best USAC National Midget finish of third in his Wayne Leshner/Hyper Racing – DeGre Engineering/Hyper/Stanton SR-11.

“We have a lot of laps at this place,” Greth points out. “You have to make good decisions here. Sometimes you sort of get lucky over which lane you choose. A couple times, I got in there, I saw cars flipping everywhere. I had to turn down off the cushion and get out of there as quickly as I could and hoped I didn’t get hit from behind. All those laps around here sure do help. I sort of knew how much the track was going to blow off. We knew where to be and were able to make the right changes.”

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP & EASTERN REGIONAL MIDGETS PRESENTED BY ARDC RACE RESULTS: August 14, 2017 – Path Valley Speedway Park – Spring Run, Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.213 (New Track Record); 2. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-11.256; 3. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.259; 4. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-11.299; 5. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-11.357; 6. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-11.405; 7. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-11.422; 8. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-11.459; 9. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.480; 10. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-11.493; 11. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.520; 12. Landon Simon, 29, Clover-11.550; 13. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-11.568; 14. Brett Arndt, 46, Essay-11.601; 15. Timmy Buckwalter, 29s, Seymour-11.624; 16. Adam Pierson, 76E, Mancini-11.626; 17. Kenny Miller III, 23m, Miller-11.734; 18. Kenney Johnson, 46x, Johnson-11.758; 19. Andrew Layser, 77L, Bright-11.884; 20. Eric Heydenreich, 11, Heydenreich-11.893; 21. Jimmy Glenn, 07, Glenn-12.128; 22. Josh Heckman, 12, Heckman-NT; 23. Shawn Jackson, 7J, Jackson-NT; 24. Jim Radney, 95, Radney-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Spencer Bayston, 3. Ryan Greth, 4. Adam Pierson, 5. Shane Golobic, 6. Andrew Layser, 7. Alex Bright, 8. Josh Heckman. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Justin Grant, 2. Brett Arndt, 3. Chad Boat, 4. Tanner Carrick, 5. Brady Bacon, 6. Kenny Miller III, 7. Eric Heydenreich, 8. Shawn Jackson. NT

CHALK STIX/INDY RACE PARTS THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Timmy Buckwalter, 2. Tanner Thorson, 3. Holly Shelton, 4. Landon Simon, 5. Brayton Lynch, 6. Jimmy Glenn, 7. Kenney Johnson. NT

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Chad Boat, 2. Tyler Courtney, 3. Ryan Greth, 4. Holly Shelton, 5. Brayton Lynch, 6. Timmy Buckwalter, 7. Tanner Carrick, 8. Brett Arndt, 9. Brady Bacon, 10. Landon Simon, 11. Adam Pierson, 12. Kenny Miller III, 13. Eric Heydenreich, 14. Tanner Thorson, 15. Justin Grant, 16. Jimmy Glenn, 17. Andrew Layser, 18. Shawn Jackson, 19. Spencer Bayston, 20. Shane Golobic. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-9 Brayton Lynch, Laps 10-24 Tanner Thorson, Lap 25 Brady Bacon, Laps 26-28 Tanner Thorson, Laps 29-30 Chad Boat.

****Spencer Bayston flipped on lap 26 of the feature. Justin Grant flipped on lap 29 of the feature.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-1150, 2-Shane Golobic-1095, 3-Brady Bacon-1074, 4-Justin Grant-1067, 5-Tanner Thorson-1058, 6-Tyler Courtney-1030, 7-Chad Boat-895, 8-Holly Shelton-840, 9-Jerry Coons Jr.-808, 10-Tanner Carrick-747.

USAC EASTERN REGIONAL MIDGETS PRESENTED BY ARDC POINTS: 1-Ryan Greth-1241, 2-Alex Bright-1110, 3-Kenny Miller III-1018, 4-Adam Pierson-979, 5-Shawn Jackson-969, 6-Trevor Kobylarz-764, 7-Brett Arndt-754, 8-Andrew Layser-735, 9-Josh Heckman-705, 10-Jay Hartman & Tommy Kunsman-631.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: August 15, 2017 – Lanco’s Clyde Martin Memorial Speedway – Spring Run, Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania Midget Week

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Spencer Bayston (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Tyler Courtney (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Justin Grant (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Timmy Buckwalter (Chalk Stix/Indy Race Parts 3rd Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Ryan Greth (11th to 3rd)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Eric Heydenreich

=====

Thorson Repeats USAC Midget Win at Lanco

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Newmanstown, Pennsylvania.....One year ago at Lanco's Clyde Martin Memorial Speedway, Tanner Thorson needed all the heroics he could muster to pull off a last-lap, last corner pass to take the victory.

In Tuesday night's third round of "Pennsylvania Midget Week" with the USAC Eastern Regional Midgets Presented by ARDC at the 1/8-mile bullring, it was a relative comfort cruise for Thorson as he led all 40 laps to take his second USAC National Midget victory of the year in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

After a tumultuous 48-hour period that saw him lose his lead on the final restart on Sunday at Susquehanna, then some, shall we say, fireworks on the final lap of Monday's feature at Path Valley Speedway Park, Thorson was champing at the bit to return to the seat after seeing near victories go by the wayside the last two nights.

"Very, very eager." Thorson exclaimed. "I've learned to put my past races behind me. If you keep worrying about the stuff that happened the last couple of nights, you lose focus and forget what you're doing here today. The best thing you can do is go out there and do what you do best and put it behind you."

Thorson was the beneficiary of an outside front row starting position after an opening lap tangle between Clauson Marshall Racing teammates Tyler Courtney and Justin Grant. Exiting turn two, Grant ramped over the right rear tire of Courtney's car, sending him flipping wildly, ending his night. After winning the "PA Midget Week" opener on the last lap at Susquehanna, Grant has found himself upside down on consecutive nights.

A double-file complete restart would move Thorson up a row from the outside of row two to the outside of row one alongside Courtney. Immediately, Thorson was gone and quickly dove down the bottom in front of Courtney to secure the position. The bottom would prove to be the place to stay on a heavy surface that was doused with moisture from Mother Nature over the past several days that didn't require the use of a water truck at any point in the track's preparation.

In most cases, you'd hear a driver describe the benefits of starting up front, but Thorson has a unique perspective contrary to the norm regarding where he prefers to begin his races. But after watching the prelims leading up to the 40-lap main event, Thorson changed his perspective, at least for this night.

"I was kind of glad I got to start on the outside of the front row," Thorson admits. "I had a feeling the track was going to stay on the bottom based on watching the micro sprint heats and B-mains. I'm not one who usually likes to start on the front row. I seem to lose more races starting on the front row than I do starting in the second or third row on back."

"Last night, Brady (Bacon) ran a little different line than I was and that made me a sitting duck, not knowing what was going on behind me," Thorson expounds. "I like to be in that 2nd or 3rd row spot so I can have room to move around and find out which line is faster. I was kind of upset at first having to move up to the front row until we started, and I saw that the track was moving down toward the bottom."

On the fourth lap, Brady Bacon got to the inside of Spencer Bayston entering turn three and was able to stick it on the bottom to claim second. Bacon led a combined 18 laps over the first two nights of "PA Midget Week" and put himself in position to make a bid for the lead if opportunity knocked.

Thorson would have to endure restart after restart, the last of which came after Holly Shelton and Kenny Miller III got together on the back straightaway on lap 21, sending Shelton flipping multiple times. She walked away.

Consistency is the key when track position is so substantial. One slip up is all it takes, and all could be lost as a freight train of cars drive by for the position. Thorson wasn't keen on letting that happen to him tonight.

"When the track's that heavy, the biggest thing is hitting your marks," Thorson notes. "The closer you could get to the infield tires, the better and not let anybody get underneath you. The way you could see the track forming up, nobody was running up there at all. It was rough and crumbly up there. It helps your mindset coming back from a yellow knowing that nobody's going to blow around you. I think that's a huge part of knowing the track and looking at it as you're rolling around there under the yellow."

With 19 to go, Thorson, Bacon and Courtney ran nose-to-tail, but gradually, Thorson kicked open the lead ever so slightly to leave Bacon and Courtney no chance down the stretch as Thorson drove away to his 12th career USAC National Midget win, tying him with a list of drivers that includes Danny Caruthers, Gene Force, Russ Gamester, Jeff Gordon, Bobby Grim and Ron Shuman. Brady Bacon, Courtney, Bayston and Shane Golobic rounded out the top-five.

It was the second year in a row for Thorson to claim victory at Lanco, a place that he took to right from the get-go due to the similarities it shares with a track he grew up competing on regularly.

"It kind of reminds me of a go-kart track I raced at back home called Cycleland Speedway," Thorson explains. The track layout itself is the same, just a little bigger car and a little bigger track this time around."

Coming into August, Thorson stood 6th in the USAC Midget National Championship standings, 132 points out of the lead. After rattling finishes of 1st, 4th, 3rd, 2nd and 2nd in his first five starts of the month, and now another victory, Thorson finds himself 4th and 84 points back as he steadily makes a charge to become a back-to-back series champ, yet the Minden, Nevada native admits that hasn't played on his mind just yet.

"I'm not here to race for points," Thorson said. "I'm going to take each race by itself as it comes. If I win, I win. If I don't, I want to run the best that I possibly can. I'm not going to dwell over worrying about points. Last year, I didn't do it one bit until the last couple of races. That's the plan this year and we'll see how it plays out. We come here to win, and Keith (Kunz) has a lot of expectations for us because of his past success and the equipment that we're in. I'm really fortunate to be with the group of people I'm with."

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP & EASTERN REGIONAL MIDGETS PRESENTED BY ARDC RACE RESULTS: August 15, 2017 – Lanco's Clyde Martin Memorial Speedway – Spring Run, Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-10.554; 2. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-10.672; 3. Tony DiMattia, 50, TDM-10.678; 4. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-10.687; 5. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-10.715; 6. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-10.740; 7. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-10.751; 8. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-10.752; 9. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-10.858; 10. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-10.871; 11. Timmy Buckwalter, 29s, Seymour-10.963; 12. Andrew Layser, 77L, Bright-11.005; 13. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-11.020; 14. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.047; 15. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.073; 16. Kenny Miller III, 23m, Miller-11.175; 17. Landon Simon, 29, Clover-11.195; 18. Adam Pierson, 76E, Mancini-11.275; 19. Eric Heydenreich, 11, Heydenreich-11.437; 20. Shawn Jackson, 7J, Jackson-11.483; 21. Jimmy Glenn, 07, Glenn-11.672; 22. Tommy Kunsman, 21, Kunsman-11.859; 23. Kenney Johnson, 46x, Johnson-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Justin Grant, 2. Shane Golobic, 3. Spencer Bayston, 4. Kenny Miller III, 5. Chad Boat, 6. Eric Heydenreich, 7. Ryan Greth. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Timmy Buckwalter, 2. Tanner Carrick, 3. Tanner Thorson, 4. Landon Simon, 5. Tyler Courtney, 6. Brady Bacon, 7. Kenney Johnson, 8. Shawn Jackson. 1:51.30

CHALK STIX/INDY RACE PARTS THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Alex Bright, 2. Adam Pierson, 3. Andrew Layser, 4. Brayton Lynch, 5. Holly Shelton, 6. Tony DiMattia, 7. Jimmy Glenn. NT

FEATURE: (40 laps) 1. Tanner Thorson, 2. Brady Bacon, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Spencer Bayston, 5. Shane Golobic, 6. Chad Boat, 7. Timmy Buckwalter, 8. Tanner Carrick, 9. Tony DiMattia, 10. Landon Simon, 11. Kenny Miller III, 12. Ryan Greth, 13. Andrew Layser, 14. Eric Heydenreich, 15. Holly Shelton, 16. Adam Pierson, 17. Brayton Lynch, 18. Alex Bright, 19. Tommy Kunsman, 20. Shawn Jackson, 21. Kenney Johnson, 22. Justin Grant. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-40 Tanner Thorson.

****Ryan Greth flipped during the first heat. Justin Grant flipped on lap 1 of the feature. Holly Shelton flipped on lap 21 of the feature.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-1220, 2-Brady Bacon-1170, 3-Shane Golobic-1145, 4-Tanner Thorson-1136, 5-Justin Grant-1098, 6-Tyler Courtney-1098, 7-Chad Boat-954, 8-Holly Shelton-877, 9-Jerry Coons Jr.-808, 10-Tanner Carrick-803.

USAC EASTERN REGIONAL MIDGETS PRESENTED BY ARDC POINTS: 1-Ryan Greth-1317, 2-Alex Bright-1174, 3-Kenny Miller III-1102, 4-Adam Pierson-1044, 5-Shawn Jackson-1019, 6-Andrew Layser-810, 7-Trevor Kobylarz-764, 8-Brett Arndt-754, 9-Josh Heckman-705, 10-Tommy Kunsman-678.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: August 17, 2017 – Linda's Speedway – Jonestown, Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania Midget Week

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Shane Golobic (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Justin Grant (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Tim Buckwalter (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Alex Bright (Chalk Stix/Indy Race Parts 3rd Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Landon Simon (17th to 10th)

=====

Boat Sinks PA Midget Week Victory No. 2 In Linda's USAC Debut

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Jonestown, Pennsylvania.....The Keystone state suited Chad Boat like a glove during Pennsylvania Midget Week as the Phoenix, Arizona native capped the four-race series with his second victory of the week in the USAC Midget National Championship's debut at Linda's Speedway.

Like last year, Boat got into the flow when the calendar flipped to the month of August. In 2016, he won three of four to begin the month while this year, it was three of six with a "Belleville Midget Nationals" prelim win serving as a prelude to his two wins in Pennsylvania.

Boat's ownership of the month of August over the past two seasons may seem like a strange, coincidental anomaly, but to him, it makes perfect sense considering their racing schedule.

"Obviously, you'd like to start the season out faster," Boat acknowledges. "We were trying some different things at the beginning of the year, but now we've figured out what we like. I think a lot of it is because we run so few times a year. A lot of these guys will race 60 times this year while this is only our 21st race. That puts us at a little bit of a disadvantage, and it takes us a little while to catch up."

From the get-go, Boat was silky smooth through the middle in his Tucker-Boat Motorsports/PristineAuction.com – K & C Drywall/Spike/Speedway Toyota as he powered away to an eventual one-and-a-half second lead by the 11th lap over Shane Golobic and Tyler Courtney as the front of the field began to wade into lapped traffic. Every car on the track ahead of Boat seemed to be involved in a furious, side-by-side battle for position, making navigating inside, outside or between them a treacherous chore that allowed Golobic to get close enough to stick his foot in the door.

However, a substantial break came to Boat just prior to the halfway point in the form of two simultaneous spins involving teammates Alex Bright and Andrew Layser at opposite ends of the racetrack to bring out the yellow. That instantly cleared out the traffic for Boat to provide him clear sailing ahead.

"Traffic was tricky," Boat admits. "I got to traffic, and I wasn't that much better than them. They were kind of holding me up, so when that caution came, it fell at the right time."

Cautions inherently bring restarts and nobody was in the same zip code as Boat when it came to that category. Time and time again, Boat used a monstrous surge when the green flag dropped to capture a healthy advantage.

"It goes back to our engines that make us take off so well," Boat praised. "I definitely wanted to find the grip and I knew if I put my car where the grip was, I'd have a great restart. Usually, you can tell if you're having a good restart or not. I also tried to change it up as much as I could to keep Shane guessing on what I was going to do. I felt comfortable with Shane behind me. He's one of the cleanest drivers in the field. If he was better than me, he'd get by me. If he wasn't better than me, we'd race it out to the end."

On a lap 20 restart following a yellow brought about for a flat left rear tire on the car of ninth-place-running/ARDC point leader Ryan Greth, Golobic was able to stay within shirt-tugging distance of Boat for the first lap. Gradually, Boat got away,

this time to a seven-tenths of a second clip two laps following the restart until action relented again when Eric Heydenreich flipped on the back straight entering turn three. He would walk away.

On the final restart with nine to go, Golobic was able to stick a nose underneath and pull even with Boat entering turn one. Boat was unfazed and remained on his line through the middle to inch ahead by the time the pair exited the second turn.

"I knew I could run as hard as I possibly could for nine laps, just like a heat race," Boat relayed. "I felt really good, especially in the first two laps after a restart. I started getting a little bit loose on entry and then slid up. I didn't know exactly where I wanted to be. I just knew if I kept running it hard and he showed me a nose, I could move down. He showed me a little bit of nose, so I moved down slightly in (turns) one and two."

Yet, in the final three laps, Golobic found new life as Boat's line began to fade slightly. Golobic dug out two-tenths per lap on the interval between he and Boat and, on the final lap, entering turn three for the final time, was able pull side-by-side briefly with Boat through the middle of the corner. Boat had the momentum higher up on the surface to clear Golobic and win his third of the month over Golobic, Spencer Bayston, Courtney and Justin Grant.

While many of the ARDC regulars have extensive experience at Linda's with it being a regular stop on their season schedule, it was the first appearance by USAC's National Midget contingent. You often hear a driver explain the difficulties of leading, which creates a situation behind them where they are not fully aware of how their closest competition is running and how they are adapting to the changes in the track.

That becomes doubly complicated when competing on a track for the initial time, yet it also evens the playing field when the track is an unknown quantity to everyone, as was the case Thursday night at Linda's.

"I just tried to stay aggressive, run it as hard as I could and not let the car slip," Boat explained. "I knew if I was driving forward, I had good bite and I could keep running there. I tried to move around; there was a hole in turn three that made it a little bit tricky. Shane (Golobic) was running below it and I was running above it. My line started wearing out a little bit in the end. I could feel myself getting looser and sliding up more on entry, so I was definitely glad to see the race coming to an end."

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP & EASTERN REGIONAL MIDGETS PRESENTED BY ARDC RACE RESULTS: August 17, 2017 – Linda's Speedway – Jonestown, Pennsylvania – Pennsylvania Midget Week

PROSOURCE QUALIFYING: 1. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-12.084; 2. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-12.091; 3. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-12.114; 4. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.117; 5. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-12.131; 6. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-12.149; 7. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.219; 8. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.252; 9. Ryan Greth, 4R, Leshner-12.255; 10. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-12.290; 11. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.420; 12. Tony DiMattia, 50, TDM-12.428; 13. Adam Pierson, 76E, Mancini-12.534; 14. Brett Arndt, 46, Arndt-12.550; 15. Timmy Buckwalter, 29s, Seymour-12.551; 16. Kenny Miller III, 23m, Miller-12.626; 17. Andrew Layser, 77L, Bright-12.631; 18. Landon Simon, 29, Clover-12.677; 19. P.J. Gargiulo, 5, JHG-12.773; 20. Eric Heydenreich, 11, Heydenreich-12.792; 21. Rob Marhefka, 99, FM-13.437; 22. Trevor Kobylarz, 14, RT-16.916; 23. Josh Heckman, 12, Heckman-NT; 24. Alex Bright, 77, Bright-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS FIRST HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Adam Pierson, 2. Holly Shelton, 3. Spencer Bayston, 4. Brady Bacon, 5. Brayton Lynch, 6. Kenny Miller III, 7. Trevor Kobylarz, 8. P.J. Gargiulo. 2:09.39

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI) SECOND HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tanner Carrick, 2. Tanner Thorson, 3. Justin Grant, 4. Shane Golobic, 5. Andrew Layser, 6. Eric Heydenreich, 7. Brett Arndt. 2:05.13

CHALK STIX/INDY RACE PARTS THIRD HEAT: (10 laps) 1. Tyler Courtney, 2. Chad Boat, 3. Timmy Buckwalter, 4. Landon Simon, 5. Ryan Greth, 6. Tony DiMattia, 7. Rob Marhefka. 2:07.38

FEATURE: (30 laps) 1. Chad Boat, 2. Shane Golobic, 3. Spencer Bayston, 4. Tyler Courtney, 5. Justin Grant, 6. Tanner Thorson, 7. Brady Bacon, 8. Holly Shelton, 9. Tanner Carrick, 10. Landon Simon, 11. Brayton Lynch, 12. Adam Pierson, 13. Trevor Kobylarz, 14. Brett Arndt, 15. Alex Bright, 16. Ryan Greth, 17. Kenny Miller III, 18. P.J. Gargiulo, 19. Timmy Buckwalter, 20. Eric Heydenreich, 21. Tony DiMattia, 22. Andrew Layser. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-30 Chad Boat.

****Eric Heydenreich flipped on lap 21 of the feature.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-1293, 2-Brady Bacon-1233, 3-Shane Golobic-1219, 4-Tanner Thorson-1198, 5-Tyler Courtney-1171, 6-Justin Grant-1167, 7-Chad Boat-1032, 8-Holly Shelton-933, 9-Tanner Carrick-857, 10-Jerry Coons Jr.-808.

USAC EASTERN REGIONAL MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY ARDC POINTS: 1-Ryan Greth-1374, 2-Alex Bright-1229, 3-Kenny Miller III-1156, 4-Adam Pierson-1122, 5-Shawn Jackson-1019, 6-Andrew Layser-855, 7-Trevor Kobylarz-831, 8-Brett Arndt-816, 9-Josh Heckman-730, 10-Tanner Thorson-687.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: September 23, 2017 – Eldora Speedway – Rossburg, Ohio – 36th 4-Crown Nationals Presented by NKT.TV

NEXT USAC EASTERN REGIONAL MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY ARDC RACE: September 29, 2017 – Linda's Speedway – Jonestown, Pennsylvania

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Brady Bacon (ProSource Fast Qualifier)

Adam Pierson (Simpson Race Products 1st Heat Winner)

Tanner Carrick (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. 2nd Heat Winner)

Tyler Courtney (Chalk Stix/Indy Race Parts 3rd Heat Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS HARD CHARGER: Landon Simon (18th to 10th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Trevor Kobylarz

=====

Bayston Adds Another Crown Jewel with Midget Win at Eldora

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Rossburg, Ohio.....Spencer Bayston's banner year reached a new zenith Saturday night at Eldora Speedway after wiring all 25 laps to win the USAC Midget National Championship portion of the 36th "4-Crown Nationals" presented by NKT.TV.

A day following his 19th birthday, the Lebanon, Indiana resident celebrated in grand style by becoming the first driver to win the “Belleville Midget Nationals” and the Midget feature at the “4-Crown” in the same season since Kyle Larson in 2011.

After being “high-point man” in his heat race, Bayston earned a spot on the pole position for the main event. On the opening lap, Bayston emerged from a brief four-wide fray in turn one to secure the lead.

Quickly, though, action was halted when fifth-starting Tyler Courtney slowed with an apparent electrical issue to bring out the caution. Courtney attempted to restart but returned to the pit area moments later just prior to the field taking the green flag with one lap in the books.

On the ensuing restart, Bayston appeared as comfy as could be running the high line that so many had experienced issues without throughout the night. Similar to Belleville, the outside wall served as the cushion and Bayston ran it to within a hair of a whisker distance from the edge.

Bayston’s nearest pursuant just before the midway point was Justin Grant. That is, until he encountered the turn one concrete, climbing up the wall before rotating and landing back on the track’s surface. Grant climbed out of the wreckage uninjured but finished for the event.

The restart saw Bayston break away from second-running Dave Darland who was overtaken by both Shane Golobic, then Brady Bacon who made a valiant charge on the inner rail, getting past Darland exiting turn four to scale his way into the top-three.

Bacon continued to claw on his low-side crawl while Golobic maintained a higher line. Despite roping in Golobic little by little over the last several laps and even taking a glimpse at second in turn two on the final lap, Golobic was able to nail down the second position for good.

Yet, up front, nobody else was game for Bayston’s flawless rim-riding performance for 25 consecutive laps, taking the victory in front of a massive crowd over Golobic, Bacon, Darland and Tanner Thorson.

With the knocking down of a few key pins on his quest to a possible first series title, Bayston swiftly extended his lead in the championship race to 66 over Bacon with just three races remaining in Wayne City, Ill., Bakersfield, Cal. and Ventura, Cal. On Saturday night, it was all a showcase for Bayston as he dominated from start to finish for his third series victory of the year.

“It makes it easy when you have a good group of guys working behind you. They know what they’re doing, and it definitely shows,” Bayston praises. “I felt so comfortable. We raced here last night in the wing car and didn’t do that great, but I really think it helped me. Coming here tonight in the midget, it felt like everything was in slow motion for me.”

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: September 23, 2017 – Eldora Speedway – Rossburg, Ohio – 36th 4-Crown Nationals Presented by NKT.TV

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS/COMPETITION SUSPENSION (CSI) FIRST HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Dave Darland (#91BT Thomas), 2. Tyler Courtney (#7BC Clauson Marshall), 3. Justin Grant (#39BC Clauson Marshall), 4. Brady Bacon (#76m FMR), 5. Tanner Thorson (#67 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 6. Chase Jones (#22 Petry-Goff), 7. Tanner Carrick (#71K Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 8. Brayton Lynch (#1K RKR), 9. Adam Pierson (#76E Mancini). 2:29.81

CHALK STIX/INDY RACE PARTS SECOND HEAT: (8 laps) 1. Shane Golobic (#17w Clauson Marshall/Wood), 2. Spencer Bayston (#97 Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 3. Chad Boat (#84 Tucker-Boat), 4. Tyler Thomas (#91T Thomas), 5. Jerry Coons Jr. (#25 Petry-

Goff), 6. Holly Shelton (#67K Kunz/Curb-Agajanian), 7. Alex Bright (#77 Bright), 8. Bear Wood (#8JR LW), 9. Rico Abreu (#97K Kunz/Curb-Agajanian). NT

FEATURE: (25 laps) 1. Spencer Bayston, 2. Shane Golobic, 3. Brady Bacon, 4. Dave Darland, 5. Tanner Thorson, 6. Holly Shelton, 7. Chad Boat, 8. Tanner Carrick, 9. Tyler Thomas, 10. Alex Bright, 11. Jerry Coons Jr., 12. Brayton Lynch, 13. Adam Pierson, 14. Bear Wood, 15. Chase Jones, 16. Justin Grant, 17. Tyler Courtney. NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-25 Spencer Bayston.

****Rico Abreu flipped at the start of the second heat.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-1363, 2-Brady Bacon-1297, 3-Shane Golobic-1286, 4-Tanner Thorson-1256, 5-Tyler Courtney-1200, 6-Justin Grant-1198, 7-Chad Boat-1084, 8-Holly Shelton-988, 9-Tanner Carrick-906, 10-Jerry Coons Jr.-846.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: October 22, 2017 – Wayne County Speedway – Wayne City, Illinois – Jason Leffler Memorial

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Dave Darland (Simpson Race Products/COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. Heat 1 Winner)

Shane Golobic (Chalk Stix/Indy Race Parts Heat 2 Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS/LARRY RICE HIGH PERFORMANCE HARD CHARGER AWARD: Holly Shelton (13th to 6th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Adam Pierson

=====

Sunday's Leffler Memorial Cancelled Due to Forecasted Rain

Wayne City, Illinois.....With an impending forecast of heavy rain on race day, USAC and POWRi officials have cancelled the Sunday, October 22 "Jason Leffler Memorial" at Wayne County Speedway.

The \$20,000-to-win event was to have brought some of the biggest names in the sport to compete for the largest payday in midget racing, but with an 80-90% chance of continuous rain throughout the day, and without much improvement or change in the forecast all week, the decision was made to cancel the event.

The "Leffler Memorial" was to have been the Midwest finale for the USAC Midget National Championship in 2017. The series now heads west for the final two events of the year in California: Bakersfield Speedway on November 18 and the season-ending "Turkey Night Grand Prix" at Ventura Raceway on November 23. Spencer Bayston holds a 66-point lead in the series' standings coming into the final two events. Logan Seavey has been crowned as the POWRi Midget champion.

NEXT USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE: November 18, 2017 Bakersfield Speedway – Bakersfield California – November Classic

=====

Bacon a Blur En Route to Bakersfield Midget Triumph

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Bakersfield, California.....With one of the busiest racing schedules of any driver in the United States, Brady Bacon annually competes in excess of 100 events a year on tracks from coast-to-coast.

In Saturday night's "November Classic," it might've appeared the Broken Arrow, Oklahoma native had been an experienced master of Bakersfield Speedway. But wouldn't you know it? Saturday night was the first time Bacon had even laid eyes on the track.

Bacon, originally lining up seventh on the grid, worked the outside line to climb to the lead on lap seven. It was a lead he would never relinquish as he picked up his third USAC National Midget victory of the year in his FMR Racing/Brown & Miller Racing Solutions – Black Watch Farms/Beast/Toyota in the National series' first stop at Bakersfield in 17 years.

"At the start, I was on the inside and I saw the outside got a pretty good run," Bacon observed. "The bottom was kind of glazed over from the moisture in the air or something. I knew it would eventually move back down there, but I figured I'd try to make the moves while I could. I went to the top and it worked out. We were the first ones in the front to do it and had a clear lane to the front."

The beginning was tumultuous as Light Up the World Beverages USAC Western States Midget regular Michael Faccinto stepped out to the lead from the outside of the front row on the initial start. Meanwhile, pole sitter Michael Pickens slotted into second. While riding the high side in turn three, contact was made between he and Holly Shelton. As Pickens sat sideways in the middle of the track, he was slammed into by Shannon McQueen, who had nowhere to go. Frankie Guerrini and Dustin Golobic also became involved but would restart along with Pickens. McQueen headed back to the hauler earlier than she had planned with a hurt racecar.

The ensuing restart would only get back on track for a pair of laps before fifth-running Shelton got the back end loose in turn three. As she slid sideways, Zeb Wise, making his USAC debut, careened in while Ryan Robinson took evasive action to avoid the melee and climbed the outside wall before coming to a stop. Shelton's night was finished, but Wise and Robinson would restart.

Once the race got back on the rails, Faccinto led the way on the bottom with series point leader Spencer Bayston just behind. Glancing behind Bayston, one could see Bacon running a slightly higher line than those he trailed, which took him to second around the outside of Bayston off turn two on the fourth lap. Bayston scrapped back, but Bacon had enough of a head of steam off turns two and four to clamp down on the top spot.

As Bacon and Bayston tussled for the runner-up position, both simultaneously chipped away at Faccinto's lead. Quickly, it became a three-car race for the lead with the top-three appearing in Blue Angels formation exiting turn two. On lap seven, Bacon surged ahead of Faccinto midway down the back straightaway to secure the lead and instantly constructed a one second gap over Faccinto and Bayston. With an open highway comfort cruise lying in front of him, Bacon was free to run his race as he pleased.

"I ran the middle in (turns) one and two a lot," Bacon explained. "I diamonded three and four and came off as straight as I could. It was really heavy, so it was easy to get pointed in the wrong direction. I just thought it was going to be too far around the top and my car was pretty good on the bottom and in the middle, so I stuck with it. I started feeling a little less grip in one and two, but I moved around and pedaled it a little more."

With Bacon pulling away, Bayston fought Faccinto for second throughout the next four laps until clearing him on lap 12. Bayston would receive a reprieve two laps later when new five-time USAC Western States Midget champion Ronnie

Gardner slid sideways to a stop on the front straightaway to bring out the caution. With the substantial lead erased, Bacon would have to get back on the saddle once again. On the first try, Bacon stumbled and Bayston was able to hang in contention. Yet, when Cory Elliott slowed to bring out the yellow moments later, Bacon would get a reprieve, and another shot at that restart.

When that chance arrived on lap 14 restart version two, Bacon left Bayston on his own and instantly spurted away to a ten car-length lead that wouldn't get any closer despite Bacon having to fight through traffic in the final five laps. Bacon would race away to his sixth career series victory over two seconds ahead of Bayston, Tanner Thorson, Tyler Courtney and Justin Grant.

In an odd circumstance, following the checkered flag, Courtney found himself on his side in Tommy Tipover fashion in turn two. He was uninjured.

Despite finishing one spot behind Bacon at the finish line at Bakersfield, Bayston extended his USAC National Midget point lead by one to 67 in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/IWX – Curb Records – TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota. All the Lebanon, Indiana driver has left to do to clinch his first title is to simply sign-in at this Thursday's season finale at Ventura (Calif.) Raceway's "Turkey Night Grand Prix."

Bayston's teammate, Thorson, of Minden, Nevada set the tone by recording the ProSource/Woodland Auto Display Fast Qualifying time before going on to finish third in his Keith Kunz-Curb-Agajanian Motorsports/JBL Audio - TRD/Bullet by Spike/Speedway Toyota.

Two USAC National Midget track records were broken at Bakersfield. Jimmy Christian's 8-lap mark set in 2000 was surpassed by Shane Golobic in heat race two. The late Kevin Doty's 12-lap record from 1998 was passed by Brady Bacon during the semi-feature.

USAC NATIONAL & LIGHT UP THE WORLD BEVERAGES WESTERN STATES MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS: November 18, 2017 Bakersfield Speedway – Bakersfield California – November Classic

PROSOURCE/WOODLAND AUTO DISPLAY QUALIFYING: 1. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.849; 2. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.912; 3. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.933; 4. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-12.973; 5. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.035; 6. Alex Schutte, 28, Schutte/McElwee-13.037; 7. Shannon McQueen, 7, McQueen-13.043; 8. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-13.059; 9. Michael Faccinto, 9D, Dodenhoff-13.103; 10. Michael Pickens, 25x, Rodela-13.103; 11. D.J. Netto, 88N, Netto-13.181; 12. Courtney Crone, 25, Rodela-13.192; 13. Frankie Guerrini, 63, Guerrini-13.219; 14. Ronnie Gardner, 68, Six8-13.225; 15. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-13.230; 16. Cory Elliott, 11E, Elliott-13.253; 17. Maria Cofer, 57, Cofer-13.272; 18. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-13.311; 19. Zeb Wise, 39, Clauson Marshall-13.344; 20. David Prickett, 22Q, Neverlift-13.357; 21. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-13.368; 22. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-13.376; 23. Matt Mitchell, 75, Miller-13.400; 24. Dustin Golobic, 17G, Wood-13.460; 25. Mason Daniel, 33m, Daniel-13.559; 26. Terry Nichols, 1p, Nichols-13.587; 27. Robert Dalby, 4D, Dalby-13.591; 28. Scott Pierovich, 35, Pierovich-13.676; 29. Kyle Beilman, 31, Beilman-14.193; 30. Ron Hazelton, 15, Hazelton-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS/EXTREME MUFFLERS FIRST HEAT: (8 laps, top-4 transfer to the feature) 1. Chad Boat, 2. Michael Faccinto, 3. Frankie Guerrini, 4. Tanner Thorson, 5. Ryan Robinson, 6. Mason Daniel, 7. Maria Cofer, 8. Kyle Beilman. 1:45.13

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI)/BROWN & MILLER RACING SOLUTIONS SECOND HEAT: (8 laps, top-4 transfer to the feature) 1. Shane Golobic, 2. Michael Pickens, 3. Spencer Bayston, 4. Tanner Carrick, 5. Ronnie Gardner, 6. Alex Schutte, 7. Terry Nichols, 8. Ron Hazelton. 1:44.14 (New Track Record)

CHALK STIX/KEIZER ALUMINUM WHEELS/SALDANA RACING PRODUCTS THIRD HEAT: (8 laps, top-4 transfer to the feature)

1. Zeb Wise, 2. Matt Mitchell, 3. Justin Grant, 4. Holly Shelton, 5. Shannon McQueen, 6. Robert Dalby, 7. D.J. Netto. 1:44.78

INDY RACE PARTS/PYROTECT RACING CELLS FOURTH HEAT: (8 laps, top-4 transfer to the feature) 1. David Prickett, 2. Dustin

Golobic, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Cory Elliott, 5. Brady Bacon, 6. Courtney Crone, 7. Scott Pierovich. 1:46.51

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. SEMI: (12 laps, top-6 transfer to the feature) 1. Brady Bacon, 2. Ryan Robinson, 3. Alex

Schutte, 4. Shannon McQueen, 5. Courtney Crone, 6. Ronnie Gardner, 7. D.J. Netto, 8. Robert Dalby, 9. Mason Daniel, 10.

Scott Pierovich, 11. Maria Cofer, 12. Terry Nichols, 13. Ron Hazelton, 14. Kyle Beilman. 2:35.69 (New Track Record)

FEATURE: (30 laps, starting position in parentheses) 1. Brady Bacon (7), 2. Spencer Bayston (5), 3. Tanner Thorson (6), 4.

Tyler Courtney (3), 5. Justin Grant (14), 6. Shane Golobic (16), 7. Ryan Robinson (8), 8. Alex Schutte (9), 9. Michael Faccinto

(2), 10. Tanner Carrick (20), 11. Frankie Guerrini (12), 12. Chad Boat (19), 13. Courtney Crone (11), 14. Matt Mitchell (21),

15. David Prickett (18), 16. Ronnie Gardner (13), 17. Michael Pickens (1), 18. Cory Elliott (15), 19. Zeb Wise (17), 20. Robert

Dalby (23), 21. Mason Daniel (24), 22. Holly Shelton (4), 23. Dustin Golobic (22), 24. Shannon McQueen (10). NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-6 Michael Faccinto, Laps 7-30 Brady Bacon.

****Tyler Courtney flipped after the checkered flag during the feature.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-1441, 2-Brady Bacon-1374, 3-Shane Golobic-1349,

4-Tanner Thorson-1331, 5-Tyler Courtney-1267, 6-Justin Grant-1262, 7-Chad Boat-1131, 8-Holly Shelton-1020, 9-Tanner

Carrick-954, 10-Jerry Coons Jr.-849.

USAC LIGHT UP THE WORLD BEVERAGES WESTERN STATES MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Ronnie Gardner-783, 2-

Frankie Guerrini-670, 3-David Prickett-636, 4-Cory Elliott-609, 5-Robert Dalby-570, 6-Courtney Crone-539, 7-Michael

Faccinto-504. 8-Shannon McQueen-424, 9-Randi Pankratz-417, 10-Mason Daniel-393.

NEXT USAC NATIONAL & LIGHT UP THE WORLD BEVERAGES WESTERN STATES MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS:

November 23, 2017 – Ventura Raceway – Ventura, California – 77th Turkey Night Grand Prix

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Tanner Thorson (ProSource/Woodland Auto Display Fast Qualifier)

Chad Boat (Simpson Race Products/Extreme Mufflers 1st Heat Winner)

Shane Golobic (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC./Brown & Miller Racing Solutions 2nd Heat Winner)

Zeb Wise (Chalk Stix/Keizer Aluminum Wheels/Saldana Racing Products 3rd Heat Winner)

David Prickett (Indy Race Parts/Pyrotech Racing Cells 4th Heat Winner)

Brady Bacon (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. Semi Winner)

KSE RACING PRODUCTS/ESSLINGER ENGINEERING HARD CHARGER: Shane Golobic (16th to 6th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Courtney Crone

=====

Bell Outduels Larson in Turkey Night Classic at Ventura

By: Richie Murray – USAC Media

Ventura, California.....Thanksgiving is the day each year when we take a little extra time to realize how fortunate we are. For those in attendance at Thursday's "Turkey Night Grand Prix," the realization quickly came to how thankful we are to have witnessed Christopher Bell and Kyle Larson duking it out against each other for 98 laps in USAC Midgets at Ventura Raceway.

The three official lead changes listed in the box score aren't indicative of the back-and-forth battle these two titans waged with sliders being exchanged like currency on both ends of the racetrack.

On the 54th lap, Bell ultimately made the winning pass on Larson with a daring outside move on the front straightaway but would have to endure the relentless persistence of Larson all the way down to turn one of the final lap when he stifled Larson's slider before it even had time to develop.

Bell, of Norman, Oklahoma, joined the ranks of two-time "Turkey Night" winners just six days after wrapping up his first NASCAR Camping World Truck Series title at Homestead (Fla.) Speedway. Though he and Larson have reached success in the NASCAR ranks in recent years, their home lies in the dirt tracks, just like old times when they were regulars on the USAC trail.

"Oh my god, it's so much fun," Bell exclaimed. "I just told Kyle that if he would've beat me, I would've been, maybe not just as happy, but still happy because it was just that much fun. That race was one of the most fun races I've run in a long time."

Straight from the outset, polesitter Larson had the upper hand as inside second row starter Bell followed in his wake on the bottom.

As Larson ringed around the berm lining the bottom of the racing surface, Bell became the first in line to venture to the top on the 12th lap, using a big bite off turn four to pull to a dead-heat at the line alongside Larson before nudging into the lead by a sliver into the first turn.

Bell never wavered in his decision to go top-shelf and it would pay off one lap later when he slipped by Larson off turn four to secure the lead.

"I could tell that the top was going to be good," Bell theorized. "Watching the sprint car feature, we saw that it got pretty good. They tilled the bottom, and I could tell it was going to be really good at the beginning. Once it started going away, I tried the top and it was right there."

On lap 40, Brayton Lynch got sideways in a shuffle for position at the exit of turn four. Facing oncoming traffic, Chad Boat met front-bumper to front-bumper with Lynch, melding the noses of each car together as Boat attempted to peel away to no avail. Courtney Crone and newly-crowned five-time USAC Light Up the World Beverages Western States Midget champ Ronnie Gardner were also involved but would restart.

When racing resumed on lap 52, Larson went to the bottom and slid his teammate Bell to snare the lead. One lap later, Bell returned the favor and slithered by Larson with just inches to spare as he tunneled between Larson's right-side wheels and the front straightaway wall. Larson attacked again into turn one with a slider, but the motion was denied, and Bell cleared away the Tryptophan after the wake-up call and sprinted back into the lead.

Following a lap 57 tangle between the two most recent USAC National Midget feature winners - Brady Bacon and series champion Spencer Bayston - Larson harassed Bell, putting it all on the line in the prestigious race in an attempt to become

just the third driver to win the event three times. On lap 66, Larson got on the bike, lifting the left side wheels as he ripped the edge of the turn three cushion in his tireless pursuit.

With three-quarters of the race in the rearview mirror, it was time to turn up the wick. The bottom became just a distant memory as the two were now inside the barrel, riding the wave in turns three and four above the cushion. On lap 80, Larson slid Bell into turn one momentarily. Bell retaliated by crossing underneath Larson off the second turn to recapture the point. In turn three, the second verse played out the same as the first as Larson slid to the lead and Bell, so Allen Iverson-esque, used a killer crossover to bolt back to the front.

"The majority of drivers understand you have to be good at the end of the race to win the race," Bell said. "At the beginning, you're just cruising and making sure you make it to the end of the race. That's the biggest thing. Kyle and I were both rolling around there about quarter-throttle at the beginning, trying to save our tires and kill some laps. It worked out and we were racing our butts off at the end."

Larson, the five-time NASCAR Monster Energy Cup winner, set up another Hail Mary that was denied as Bell wheelied away off the top of turn two to remain in front. Tyler Courtney, the USAC West Coast/VRA Sprint Car feature winner earlier in the night, slowed to a stop in turn one to bring out the yellow and provide a breather for both the drivers and fans alike.

On the ensuing restart, Bell jetted away from Larson and, with ten to go, held a lead of over one second with a full nest of lappers resting in the distance. Just prior to lapped traffic possibly becoming a factor with a mere four laps to go, Holly Shelton and Bacon performed a synchronized spin between turns one and two that brought out the final yellow and one more stanza that Bell had to deal with Larson.

"The track was so technical," Bell explained. "It was all about hitting your marks and minimizing mistakes because you weren't going to make a mistake-free lap tonight. You just had to make sure when you made a mistake that you could recover from it. Once I got going on those green flag runs, I could get my momentum built up and make good, competitive laps. But after the yellow flags, it was tough to pick your rhythm back up. I knew I was a sitting duck their leading on the restarts. On the final one, Kyle got one last bomb on me and I was able to get him back."

Larson's first lob of a bomb was a success in turn one on the lap 95 restart as he scraped across the surface to snag the race lead from Bell. Bell counter-punched and ripped away the lead back away from Larson with a slider into turn three. Entering turn one with two laps remaining, wheels banged and nerf bars clanged as Larson shot to the lead past Bell once again.

As uncertain as a game of tug-of-war teetering on a see-saw, Bell launched like a missile on a hellbound train to slide across the nose of Larson and into the lead between turns three and four to capture the lead for good. Larson threw a haymaker entering turn three coming to the white flag, pulling side-by-side with Bell at the exit of four where it momentarily became three-wide with Shane Golobic arriving seemingly out of the clear blue sky to mount a challenge for the lead.

Larson tried once more on the final lap, but Bell savagely, and wisely, took a lower entrance into turn one, thus preventing a final pull of the pin from Larson. Bell carried on with a 0.193 second lead across the finish line as Larson blasted off the top of the final corner to nip Golobic by a wheel at the line for the runner-up spot. Past "Turkey Night" winner Tanner Thorson was fourth and Don Basile "Rookie of the Race" Zeb Wise was fifth in his second-career USAC National Midget start.

Bell was 4 for 7 in USAC National Midget feature appearances in 2017 for a .571 batting average. His 21st career series victory tied him with Steve Cannon, Jimmy Caruthers, Rex Easton and Ken Schrader for 27th all-time.

The fourth-straight "Turkey Night" win for the Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports team began with Bell's victory in 2014. Firsts are always special in any circumstance, but this one has even more meaning for the 22-year-old, 2013 USAC National Midget titlist.

“I definitely had to work harder for this one. This one was even more fun and more special.”

USAC NATIONAL & LIGHT UP THE WORLD BEVERAGES WESTERN STATES MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP RACE RESULTS:
November 23, 2017 – Ventura Raceway – Ventura, California – 77th Turkey Night Grand Prix

PROSOURCE/WOODLAND AUTO DISPLAY QUALIFYING: (top-12 locked into the feature) 1. Kyle Larson, 1, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.888; 2. Jake Swanson, 73, Ford-11.909; 3. Christopher Bell, 21, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-11.933; 4. Shane Golobic, 17w, Clauson Marshall/Wood-12.060; 5. Justin Grant, 39BC, Clauson Marshall-12.081; 6. Brayton Lynch, 1K, RKR-12.119; 7. Logan Seavey, 4A, RAMS-12.200; 8. Spencer Bayston, 97, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.210; 9. Tanner Thorson, 67, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.238; 10. Michael Faccinto, 9D, Dodenhoff-12.249; 11. Brady Bacon, 76m, FMR-12.266; 12. Tucker Klaasmeyer, 27, Klaasmeyer-12.269; 13. Kevin Thomas Jr., 25, Petry/Goff-12.274; 14. Chad Boat, 84, Tucker/Boat-12.276; 15. Brad Sweet, 63x, Dooling/Hayward-12.282; 16. Michael Pickens, 25x, Rodela-12.290; 17. Holly Shelton, 67K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.326; 18. Courtney Crone, 25c, Rodela-12.342; 19. Zeb Wise, 39, Clauson Marshall-12.391; 20. Chase Briscoe, 5, Briscoe-12.393; 21. Carson Macedo, 73x, Ford-12.460; 22. Ronnie Gardner, 68, Six8-12.471; 23. Frankie Guerrini, 63, Guerrini-12.490; 24. Cory Elliott, 11E, Elliott-12.505; 25. Clayton Ruston, 7R, CR-12.512; 26. Maria Cofer, 57, Cofer-12.520; 27. Tyler Nelson, 47, Mason-12.535; 28. Dustin Golobic, 17G, Wood-12.593; 29. Danny Stratton, 98, Blondel-12.605; 30. David Prickett, 22Q, Neverlift-12.608; 31. Cody Swanson, 17, Swanson-12.680; 32. Ryan Robinson, 71, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.696; 33. Robert Dalby, 4D, Dalby-12.702; 34. Dave Darland, 73T, Ford-12.729; 35. Tanner Carrick, 71K, Kunz/Curb-Agajanian-12.745; 36. Colton Heath, 99, Heath-12.802; 37. Tyler Courtney, 7BC, Clauson Marshall-12.820; 38. Randi Pankratz, 8, Pankratz-12.847; 39. Daniel Robinson, 56, Fifty6x-12.872; 40. Terry Nichols, 1p, Nichols-12.878; 41. Carson Garrett, 15G, Garrett-12.882; 42. Tyler Edwards, 2JD, Shenanigans/Neverlift-12.894; 43. Mack DeMan, 9E, Dodenhoff-12.924; 44. Jake Vermeer, 87JR, Vermeer-12.938; 45. Ron Hazelton, 15, Hazelton-12.972; 46. Kyle Beilman, 31, Beilman-13.020; 47. Kyle Smith, 55, Smith-13.113; 48. Bryan Drollinger, 71x, Drollinger-13.385; 49. Matt Mitchell, 75, Miller-15.658; 50. Robby Josett, 2, Josett-NT.

SIMPSON RACE PRODUCTS/EXTREME MUFFLERS FIRST QUALIFIER: (12 laps, top-4 transfer to the feature, finishers 5-12 transfer to the semi) 1. Tyler Thomas, 2. Zeb Wise, 3. Carson Macedo, 4. Brad Sweet, 5. Holly Shelton, 6. Cody Swanson, 7. Danny Stratton, 8. Tyler Courtney, 9. Clayton Ruston, 10. Robert Dalby, 11. Tanner Carrick, 12. Tyler Nelson, 13. Daniel Robinson, 14. Kyle Smith, 15. Mack DeMan, 16. Carson Garrett, 17. Ron Hazelton, 18. Frankie Guerrini. NT

COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC. (CSI)/BROWN & MILLER RACING SOLUTIONS SECOND QUALIFIER: (12 laps, top-4 transfer to the feature, finishers 5-12 transfer to the semi) 1. Chad Boat, 2. Michael Pickens, 3. Courtney Crone, 4. Cory Elliott, 5. Ronnie Gardner, 6. Chase Briscoe, 7. Maria Cofer, 8. Dustin Golobic, 9. Ryan Robinson, 10. Tyler Edwards, 11. Randi Pankratz, 12. Colton Heath, 13. Terry Nichols, 14. David Prickett, 15. Dave Darland, 16. Kyle Beilman, 17. Jake Vermeer, 18. Bryan Drollinger. NT

CHALK STIX/KEIZER ALUMINUM WHEELS/SALDANA RACING PRODUCTS/INDY RACE PARTS/PYROTECT RACING CELLS SEMI: (12 laps, top-6 transfer to the feature) 1. Holly Shelton, 2. Ronnie Gardner, 3. Tyler Courtney, 4. Chase Briscoe, 5. Ryan Robinson, 6. Tyler Edwards, 7. Colton Heath, 8. Clayton Ruston, 9. Robert Dalby, 10. Tanner Carrick, 11. Maria Cofer, 12. Randi Pankratz, 13. Danny Stratton, 14. Tyler Nelson, 15. Dustin Golobic, 16. Cody Swanson. NT

FEATURE: (98 laps, starting position in parentheses) 1. Christopher Bell (3), 2. Kyle Larson (1), 3. Shane Golobic (4), 4. Tanner Thorson (9), 5. Zeb Wise (15), 6. Carson Macedo (17), 7. Justin Grant (5), 8. Ryan Robinson (25), 9. Brad Sweet (19), 10. Michael Faccinto (10), 11. Tanner Carrick (27), 12. Brady Bacon (11), 13. Kevin Thomas Jr. (13), 14. Holly Shelton (21), 15. Logan Seavey (7), 16. Spencer Bayston (8), 17. David Prickett (29), 18. Ronnie Gardner (22), 19. Jake Swanson (2), 20. Courtney Crone (18), 21. Chase Briscoe (24), 22. Tyler Courtney (23), 23. Chad Boat (14), 24. Brayton Lynch (6), 25. Tucker Klaasmeyer (12), 26. Tyler Edwards (26), 27. Cory Elliott (20), 28. Frankie Guerrini (28), 29. Michael Pickens (16). NT

FEATURE LAP LEADERS: Laps 1-12 Kyle Larson, Laps 13-52 Christopher Bell, Lap 53 Kyle Larson, Lap 54-98 Christopher Bell.

****Cody Swanson flipped during the semi.**

USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Spencer Bayston-1472, 2-Shane Golobic-1416, 3-Brady Bacon-1413, 4-Tanner Thorson-1392, 5-Justin Grant-1316, 6-Tyler Courtney-1290, 7-Chad Boat-1154, 8-Holly Shelton-1055, 9-Tanner Carrick-995, 10-Jerry Coons Jr.-849.

USAC LIGHT UP THE WORLD BEVERAGES WESTERN STATES MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: 1-Ronnie Gardner-810, 2-Frankie Guerrini-693, 3-David Prickett-665, 4-Cory Elliott-632, 5-Robert Dalby-580, 6-Courtney Crone-562, 7-Michael Faccinto-547. 8-Randi Pankratz-427, 9-Shannon McQueen-424, 10-Shane Golobic-416.

CONTINGENCY AWARD WINNERS:

Kyle Larson (ProSource/Woodland Auto Display Fast Qualifier)

Kevin Thomas Jr. (Simpson Race Products/Extreme Mufflers 1st Qualifier Winner)

Chad Boat (COMPETITION SUSPENSION INC./Brown & Miller Racing Solutions 2nd Qualifier Winner)

Zeb Wise (Chalk Stix/Keizer Aluminum Wheels/Saldana Racing Products/Indy Race Parts Last Chance Winner)

DON BASILE ROOKIE OF THE RACE: Zeb Wise

KSE RACING PRODUCTS/ESSLINGER ENGINEERING HARD CHARGER: Ryan Robinson (25th to 8th)

WILWOOD BRAKES 13TH PLACE FINISHER: Kevin Thomas Jr.

=====

2017 USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SCHEDULE & RESULTS

Mar 18: &&& Du Quoin, IL - Southern Illinois Center

WINNER: Justin Grant (Clauson Marshall Racing #39BC)

Apr 7: Kokomo, IN - Kokomo Speedway

WINNER: Brady Bacon (FMR Racing #76m)

Apr 8: Kokomo, IN - Kokomo Speedway

WINNER: Brady Bacon (FMR Racing #76m)

May 19: Granite City, IL – Tri-City Speedway

WINNER: Rained Out

Jun 6: @@@ Montpelier, IN - Montpelier Motor Speedway

WINNER: Tyler Courtney (Clauson Marshall Racing #7BC)

Jun 7: @@@ Gas City, IN - Gas City I-69 Speedway

WINNER: Michael Pickens (Seamount Racing #1NZ)

Jun 8: @@@ Putnamville, IN - Lincoln Park Speedway

WINNER: Michael Pickens (Seamount Racing #1NZ)

Jun 9: @@@ Bloomington, IN - Bloomington Speedway

WINNER: Tyler Courtney (Clauson Marshall Racing #7BC)

Jun 10: @@@ Lawrenceburg, IN - Lawrenceburg Speedway

WINNER: Rico Abreu (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21)

Jun 11: @@@ Kokomo, IN - Kokomo Speedway

WINNER: Spencer Bayston (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #97)

Jul 1: Macon, IL – Macon Speedway

WINNER: Christopher Bell (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21)

Jul 2: Lincoln, IL – Lincoln Speedway

WINNER: Christopher Bell (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21)

Jul 3: Springfield, IL – Illinois State Fairgrounds Multi-Purpose Arena

WINNER: Tyler Courtney (Clauson Marshall Racing #7BC)

Aug 1: Fairbury, NE – Jefferson County Speedway

WINNER: Tanner Thorson (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #67)

Aug 2: Beloit, KS - Solomon Valley Raceway

WINNER: Christopher Bell (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21)

Aug 4: Belleville, KS - Belleville High Banks

WINNER: Chad Boat (Tucker/Boat Motorsports #84)

Aug 5: Belleville, KS - Belleville High Banks

WINNER: Spencer Bayston (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #97)

Aug 13: *** York Haven, PA - Susquehanna Speedway

WINNER: Justin Grant (Clauson Marshall Racing #39BC)

Aug 14: *** Spring Run, PA - Path Valley Speedway Park

WINNER: Chad Boat (Tucker/Boat Motorsports #84)

Aug 15: *** Newmanstown, PA - Lanco's Clyde Martin Memorial Speedway

WINNER: Tanner Thorson (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #67)

Aug 17: *** Jonestown, PA – Linda's Speedway

WINNER: Chad Boat (Tucker/Boat Motorsports #84)

Sep 23: Rossburg, OH - Eldora Speedway

WINNER: Spencer Bayston (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #97)

Oct 22: %%% Wayne City, IL - Wayne County Speedway

WINNER: Rained Out

Nov. 18: ### Bakersfield, CA – Bakersfield Speedway

WINNER: Brady Bacon (FMR Racing #76m)

Nov 23: ### Ventura, CA - Ventura Raceway

WINNER: Christopher Bell (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21)

Dec 16: &&& (SE) Du Quoin, IL - Southern Illinois Center

WINNER: Christopher Bell (Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21)

Races noted with &&& represent an indoor race.

Races noted with @@@ represent USAC Indiana Midget Week.

Races noted with *** represent a race with the USAC Eastern Regional Midgets Presented by ARDC.

Races noted with %%% represent a co-sanctioned race with POWRi.

Races noted with ### represent a Co-Sanctioned race with the USAC Western States Midget Championship.

Races noted with (SE) represent a non-points special event.

=====

2017 USAC National Midget Driver Points

Pos.	Pts.	Driver, Hometown
1	1472	Spencer Bayston, Lebanon, Indiana
2	1416	Shane Golobic, Fremont, California
3	1413	Brady Bacon, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma
4	1392	Tanner Thorson, Minden, Nevada
5	1316	Justin Grant, Lone, California
6	1290	Tyler Courtney, Indianapolis, Indiana
7	1154	Chad Boat, Phoenix, Arizona
8	1055	Holly Shelton, Sacramento, California

9	995	Tanner Carrick (R), Lincoln, California
10	849	Jerry Coons Jr., Tucson, Arizona
11	777	Ryan Robinson, Foresthill, California
12	633	Tyler Thomas, Collinsville, Oklahoma
13	627	Brayton Lynch, Springfield, Illinois
14	542	Alex Bright, Collegeville, Pennsylvania
15	538	Dave Darland, Lincoln, Indiana
16	439	Michael Pickens, Auckland, New Zealand
17	359	Gage Walker, Fairland, Indiana
18	326	Ryan Greth, Shartlesville, Pennsylvania
19	304	Jake Neuman, New Berlin, Illinois
20	266	Zach Daum, Pocahontas, Illinois
21	181	Davey Ray, Davenport, Iowa
22	153	Kyle Schuett, Philo, Illinois
23	131	Chris Windom, Canton, Illinois
24	129	Tony DiMattia, Malvern, Pennsylvania
25	55	Bear Wood, New Madison, Ohio
26	34	David Budres, Beloit, Wisconsin
27	10	Shane Cottle, Kansas, Illinois

(R) represents the USAC National Midget Rookie of the Year

=====

2017 USAC National Midget Entrant Points

Pos.	Pts.	Entrant, Location
1	1472	Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports, Columbus, Indiana (#97)
2	1416	Clauson Marshall Racing-Matt Wood, Fishers, Indiana (#17w)
3	1413	FMR Racing, Palm City, Florida (#76m)
4	1392	Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports, Columbus, Indiana (#67)
5	1316	Clauson Marshall Racing, Fishers, Indiana (#39BC)

6	1290	Clauson Marshall Racing, Fishers, Indiana (#7BC)
7	1154	Tucker-Boat Motorsports, Mooresville, North Carolina (#84)
8	1055	Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports, Columbus, Indiana (#67K)
9	1040	Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports, Columbus, Indiana (#21)
10	995	Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports, Columbus, Indiana (#71K)
11	886	Petry-Goff Motorsports, Greenfield, Indiana (#25)
12	671	Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports, Columbus, Indiana (#71)
13	633	Brian Thomas, Catoosa, Oklahoma (#91T)
14	627	Rusty Kunz Racing, Springfield, Illinois (#1K)
15	542	Alex Bright Racing, Royersford, Pennsylvania (#77)
16	467	Gray Auto, Greenfield, Indiana (#11)
17	380	Seamount Racing, Auckland, New Zealand (#1NZ)
18	339	Brian Walker, Fairland, Indiana (#7)
19	326	Wayne Leshner, New Bloomfield, Pennsylvania (#4R)
20	304	Jim Neuman, New Berlin, Illinois (#3N)
21	266	Daum Motorsports, Pocahontas, Illinois (#5D)
22	226	RayPro, Indianapolis, Indiana (#33)
23	153	Schuett Racing, Philo, Illinois (#9K)
24	130	Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports, Columbus, Indiana (#97K)
25	129	Tony DiMattia Motorsports, Malvern, Pennsylvania (#50)
26	34	Manic Racing, Beloit, Wisconsin (#31)

=====

2017 USAC National Midget Rookie of the Year Points

Pos.	Pts.	Driver, Hometown
1	995	Tanner Carrick (Lincoln, CA)
2	627	Brayton Lynch (Springfield, IL)
3	304	Jake Neuman (New Berlin, IL)
4	153	Kyle Schuett (Philo, IL)

5	129	Tony DiMattia (Malvern, PA)
6	55	Bear Wood (New Madison, OH)

=====

2017 USAC MIDGET NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP STATISTICS

FEATURE WINS:

4-Christopher Bell (Macon Speedway on Jul 1, Lincoln, IL Speedway on Jul 2, Solomon Valley Raceway on Aug 2 & Ventura Raceway on Nov 23)

3-Brady Bacon (Kokomo Speedway on Apr 8, Kokomo Speedway on Apr 9 & Bakersfield Speedway on Nov 18)

3-Spencer Bayston (Kokomo Speedway on Jun 11, the Belleville High Banks on Aug 5 & Eldora Speedway on Sep 23)

3-Chad Boat (Belleville High Banks on Aug 4, Path Valley Speedway Park on Aug 14 & Linda's Speedway on Aug 17)

3-Tyler Courtney (Montpelier Motor Speedway on Jun 6, Bloomington Speedway on Jun 9 & the Illinois State Fairgrounds Multi-Purpose Arena on Jul 3)

2-Justin Grant (Southern Illinois Center on Mar 18 & Susquehanna Speedway on Aug 13)

2-Michael Pickens (Gas City I-69 Speedway on Jun 7 & Lincoln Park Speedway on Jun 8)

2-Tanner Thorson (Jefferson County Speedway on Aug 1 & Lanco's Clyde Martin Memorial Speedway on Aug 15)

1-Rico Abreu (Lawrenceburg Speedway on Jun 10)

=====

FEATURE LAPS LED:

147-Christopher Bell

135-Spencer Bayston

106-Tyler Courtney

103-Tanner Thorson

80-Brady Bacon

62-Chad Boat

40-Tyler Thomas

27-Holly Shelton

- 19-Justin Grant
- 17-Jerry Coons Jr.
- 16-Rico Abreu & Alex Bright
- 13-Kyle Larson
- 9-Brayton Lynch
- 7-Michael Pickens
- 6-Michael Faccinto
- 5-Shane Golobic

=====

TOP 5 FEATURE FINISHES:

- 14-Spencer Bayston
- 13-Tyler Courtney, Shane Golobic & Tanner Thorson
- 12-Brady Bacon
- 10-Justin Grant
- 6-Christopher Bell
- 5-Chad Boat & Jerry Coons Jr.
- 4-Rico Abreu & Holly Shelton
- 3-Michael Pickens
- 2-Dave Darland, Kyle Larson & Kevin Thomas Jr.
- 1-Brent Beauchamp, Alex Bright, Tanner Carrick, Ryan Greth, Brayton Lynch, Tyler Thomas & Zeb Wise

=====

TOP 10 FEATURE FINISHES:

- 21-Shane Golobic
- 20-Brady Bacon
- 19-Spencer Bayston
- 18-Tanner Thorson

16-Justin Grant

15-Tyler Courtney

12-Chad Boat

11-Jerry Coons Jr.

10-Ryan Robinson

9-Tanner Carrick & Holly Shelton

7-Christopher Bell

6-Rico Abreu

5-Dave Darland, Michael Pickens & Tyler Thomas

4-Alex Bright

3-Landon Simon

2-Brett Arndt, Brent Beauchamp, Tim Buckwalter, Zach Daum, Michael Faccinto, Ronnie Gardner, Kyle Larson, Brayton Lynch, Jake Neuman, Kevin Thomas Jr. & Gage Walker

1-Tony DiMattia, Ryan Greth, Tucker Klaasmeyer, Trevor Kobylarz, Carson Macedo, Josh Most, Daniel Robinson, Tony Roney, Alex Schutte, Brad Sweet, Billy Wease, Chris Windom & Zeb Wise

=====

FAST QUALIFYING TIMES: (Presented by ProSource)

3-Kyle Larson & Tanner Thorson

2-Brady Bacon, Spencer Bayston, Chad Boat & Shane Golobic

1-Tanner Carrick, Tyler Courtney, Zach Daum, Justin Grant & Michael Pickens

=====

HEAT RACE WINS: (Presented by Simpson Race Products, Competition Suspension Inc., Chalk Stix & Indy Race Parts)

8-Shane Golobic

7-Tyler Courtney

6-Spencer Bayston, Jerry Coons Jr. & Justin Grant

5-Tanner Carrick & Tanner Thorson

4-Chad Boat, Alex Bright & Tyler Thomas

2-Brady Bacon, Christopher Bell, Timmy Buckwalter, Colten Cottle, Dave Darland, Jake Neuman & Holly Shelton

1-Rico Abreu, Cody Brewer, Zach Daum, Ronnie Gardner, Nick Hamilton, Tucker Klaasmeyer, Adam Pierson, David Prickett, Tony Roney, Matt Veatch, Gage Walker & Zeb Wise

=====

DASH WINS:

1-Spencer Bayston & Shane Golobic

=====

QUALIFYING RACE WINS:

1-Brent Beauchamp, Christopher Bell, Chad Boat, Tyler Courtney, Shane Golobic, Justin Grant, Kevin Thomas Jr., Tyler Thomas, Gage Walker & Billy Wease

=====

C-MAIN WINS:

2-Chance Morton

1-Tyler Courtney

=====

SEMI WINS:

3-Brady Bacon

2-Shane Golobic & Holly Shelton

1-Spencer Bayston, Tanner Carrick, Tyler Courtney, Zach Daum, Chett Gehrke, Michael Pickens, Adam Pierson, Ryan Robinson, Kevin Thomas Jr., Tyler Thomas & Gage Walker

=====

FEATURE STARTS:

23-Brady Bacon, Spencer Bayston, Shane Golobic, Justin Grant & Tanner Thorson

22-Chad Boat, Tanner Carrick, Tyler Courtney & Holly Shelton

17-Jerry Coons Jr. & Ryan Robinson

16-Brayton Lynch

14-Tyler Thomas

12-Alex Bright

11-Dave Darland

8-Christopher Bell, Ronnie Gardner, Ryan Greth, Tyler Nelson, Jake Neuman, Michael Pickens & Gage Walker

7-Rico Abreu & Adam Pierson

6-Zach Daum

5-Davey Ray

4-Courtney Crone, Tucker Klaasmeyer, Andrew Layser, Kenny Miller III, Kyle Schuett & Landon Simon

3-Brett Arndt, Brent Beauchamp, Timmy Buckwalter, Eric Heydenreich, Matt Johnson, Kyle Larson, Joe B. Miller, Daniel Robinson, Jeff Stasa, Kevin Thomas Jr. & Chris Windom

2-Paul Babich, Robert Bell, Cody Brewer, Steve Buckwalter, Mark Chisholm, Colten Cottle, Tony DiMattia, Cory Elliott, Michael Faccinto, P.J. Gargiulo, Terry Goodwin, Frankie Guerrini, Scott Hatton, Shawn Jackson, Kenney Johnson, Chase Jones, Trevor Kobylarz, Tommy Kunsman, Trey Marcham, Zach Middleton, Ashley Oerter, Randy Oerter, Ryan Oerter, Justin Peck, David Prickett, Collin Rinehart & Zeb Wise

1-Daniel Adler, Justin Allgaier, Chris Andrews, Shelby Bosie, Clinton Boyles, Brenden Bright, Chase Briscoe, David Budres, Robert Dalby, Mason Daniel, Tyler Edwards, Chett Gehrke, Jimmy Glenn, Dustin Golobic, Nick Hamilton, Mike Hess, John Klabunde, Nick Knepper, Carson Macedo, Shannon McQueen, Matt Mitchell, Chance Morton, Josh Most, Jimi Quin, Jim Radney, D.J. Raw, Tony Roney, Alex Schutte, Ray Seach, Logan Seavey, Troy Simpson, Jake Swanson, Brad Sweet, Billy Wease, Korey Weyant, Ty Williams & Bear Wood

=====

HARD CHARGER OF THE RACE: (Presented by KSE Racing Products)

Mar 18: Southern Illinois Center - Shane Golobic (14th to 2nd)

Apr. 8: Kokomo Speedway - Tyler Thomas (20th to 8th)

Apr. 9: Kokomo Speedway - Rico Abreu (22nd to 4th)

Jun. 6: Montpelier Motor Speedway - Shane Golobic (14th to 6th)

Jun. 7: Gas City I-69 Speedway - Ronnie Gardner (22nd to 9th)

Jun. 8: Lincoln Park Speedway - Tyler Courtney (20th to 3rd)

Jun. 9: Bloomington Speedway - Tyler Courtney (7th to 1st)
Jun. 10: Lawrenceburg Speedway - Shane Golobic (15th to 4th)
Jun. 11: Kokomo Speedway - Chad Boat (18th to 8th)
Jul. 1: Macon Speedway – Shane Golobic (21st to 5th)
Jul. 2: Lincoln (IL) Speedway – Ryan Robinson (20th to 8th)
Jul. 3: Illinois State Fairgrounds Multi-Purpose Arena – Dave Darland (15th to 4th)
Aug. 1: Jefferson County Fairgrounds – Jerry Coons Jr. (14th to 8th)
Aug. 2: Solomon Valley Raceway – Joe B. Miller (21st to 14th)
Aug. 4: Belleville High Banks – Tyler Courtney (22nd to 7th)
Aug. 5: Belleville High Banks – Brady Bacon (10th to 5th)
Aug. 13: Susquehanna Speedway – Tanner Carrick (14th to 5th)
Aug. 14: Path Valley Speedway Park – Ryan Greth (11th to 3rd)
Aug. 15: Lanco's Clyde Martin Memorial Speedway – Landon Simon (17th to 10th)
Aug. 17: Linda's Speedway – Landon Simon (18th to 10th)
Sep. 23: Eldora Speedway – Holly Shelton (13th to 6th)
Nov. 18: Bakersfield Speedway – Shane Golobic (16th to 6th)
Nov. 23: Ventura Raceway – Ryan Robinson (25th to 8th)

=====

13TH PLACE FINISHERS: (Presented by Wilwood Brakes)

Mar 18: Southern Illinois Center – Gage Walker
Apr. 8: Kokomo Speedway – Gage Walker
Apr. 9: Kokomo Speedway – Alex Bright
Jun. 6: Montpelier Motor Speedway – Davey Ray
Jun. 7: Gas City I-69 Speedway – Holly Shelton
Jun. 8: Lincoln Park Speedway – Dave Darland
Jun. 9: Bloomington Speedway – Ronnie Gardner
Jun. 10: Lawrenceburg Speedway – Ryan Greth
Jun. 11: Kokomo Speedway – Gage Walker

Jul. 1: Macon Speedway – Jerry Coons Jr.
Jul. 2: Lincoln (IL) Speedway – Tanner Carrick
Jul. 3: Illinois State Fairgrounds Multi-Purpose Arena – Justin Allgaier
Aug. 1: Jefferson County Fairgrounds – Tanner Carrick
Aug. 2: Solomon Valley Raceway – Tucker Klaasmeyer
Aug. 4: Belleville High Banks – Jeff Stasa
Aug. 5: Belleville High Banks – Tyler Courtney
Aug. 13: Susquehanna Speedway – Brayton Lynch
Aug. 14: Path Valley Speedway Park – Eric Heydenreich
Aug. 15: Lanco’s Clyde Martin Memorial Speedway – Andrew Layser
Aug. 17: Linda’s Speedway – Trevor Kobylarz
Sep. 23: Eldora Speedway – Adam Pierson
Nov. 18: Bakersfield Speedway – Courtney Crone
Nov. 23: Ventura Raceway – Kevin Thomas Jr.

=====

2017 USAC NATIONAL MIDGET DRIVER ROSTER:

A

RICO ABREU/St. Helena, California (Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21 & Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #97K)

DANIEL ADLER/St. Louis, Missouri (Mike Adler #50A)

JUSTIN ALLGAIER/Riverton, Illinois (Allgaier Motorsports 7A)

CHRIS ANDREWS/Sandusky, Ohio (Brian Thomas #91A)

BRETT ARNDT/Topton, Pennsylvania (Essay Racing #46)

B

TERRY BABB/Decatur, Illinois (Terry Babb #88)

PAUL BABICH/Fort Collins, Colorado (Hamilton Motorsports/Halarr Racing #69)

BRADY BACON/Broken Arrow, Oklahoma (FMR Racing #76m)

CHRIS BAUE/Indianapolis, Indiana (Chris Baue #2 & Chris Baue #35)

SPENCER BAYSTON/Lebanon, Indiana (Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #97)

BRENT BEAUCHAMP/Fairland, Indiana (B & B Motorsports #11B)

KYLE BEILMAN/Santa Monica, California (Bill Beilman #31)

CHRISTOPHER BELL/Norman, Oklahoma (Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21)

ROBERT BELL/Colfax, Iowa (Robert Bell Motorsports #71½)

LANCE BENNETT/Parker, Colorado (Bennett Motorsports #10)

DAN BINER/Sydney, New South Wales (Seven LLC #7x)

CHAD BOAT/Phoenix, Arizona (Tucker-Boat Motorsports #84)

SHELBY BOSIE/Sherman, Illinois (Shelby Bosie #3B)

CLINTON BOYLES/Greenwood, Missouri (Joe Boyles #98)

CODY BREWER/Choctaw, Oklahoma (Central #96)

ALEX BRIGHT/Collegeville, Pennsylvania (Alex Bright Racing #77)

BRENDEN BRIGHT/Collegeville, Pennsylvania (Ted Bright #92)

CHASE BRISCOE/Mitchell, Indiana (Chase Briscoe #5)

STEVE BUCKWALTER/Royersford, Pennsylvania (Ronk #9p, Brian Buckwalter #25B & Jamie Speers #74)

TIMMY BUCKWALTER/Douglassville, Pennsylvania (Seymour Performance #29)

DAVID BUDRES/Beloit, Wisconsin (Manic Racing #31)

C

DALTON CAMFIELD/Decatur, Illinois (Camfield Racing #87c)

DEVIN CAMFIELD/Decatur, Illinois (Camfield Racing #17c)

TANNER CARRICK/Lincoln, California (Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #71K)

ISAAC CHAPPLE/Willow Branch, Indiana (Isaac Chapple Racing #52)

MARK CHISHOLM/Cheyenne, Wyoming (Team Fifty6x Racing #56x)

MARIA COFER/Macdoel, California (Johnny Cofer #57)

KELLEN CONOVER/St. Louis, Missouri (Chris Baue #2)

JERRY COONS JR./Tucson, Arizona (Petry/Goff Motorsports #25)

COLTEN COTTLE/Kansas, Illinois (Rick Cottle #5c)

SHANE COTTLE/Kokomo, Indiana (Schuett Racing #9K)

TYLER COURTNEY/Indianapolis, Indiana (Clauson Marshall Racing #7BC)

COURTNEY CRONE/Corona, California (Jerome Rodela #25c)

JEFF CROOK/Garden City, Kansas (Jeff Crook Racing #5J)

KYLE CUMMINS/Princeton, Indiana (Chase Briscoe #5)

D

ROBERT DALBY/Anaheim, California (Ken Dalby #4D)

MASON DANIEL/Visalia, California (Scott Daniel #33m)

DAVE DARLAND/Lincoln, Indiana (Gray Auto #11, Keith Ford #73T & Brian Thomas #91BT)

ZACH DAUM/Pocahontas, Illinois (Daum Motorsports #5D)

MITCHELL DAVIS/Auburn, Illinois (Shane Morgan #15s)

MACK DeMAN/Mississauga, Ontario (Sean Dodenhoff #9E)

JUSTIN DICKERSON/Pittsboro, Indiana (Mike Dickerson #21D)

TONY DiMATTIA/Malvern, Pennsylvania (Tony DiMattia Motorsports #50)

BRYAN DROLLINGER/Lomita, California (Drollinger Bros. Racing #71x)

E

TYLER EDWARDS/Salina, Oklahoma (Shenanigans/Neverlift Motorsports #2JD)

CORY ELLIOTT/Bakersfield, California (Mitch Elliott #11E)

GEOFF ENSIGN/Sebastopol, California (Ted Finkenbinder #3F)

F

MICHAEL FACCINTO/Hanford, California (Sean Dodenhoff #9D)

COLE FEHR/Coatesville, Indiana (Live Loud Racing #15F)

ANDREW FELKER/Carl Junction, Missouri (A.J. Felker #37)

G

RONNIE GARDNER/Corona, California (Jerome Rodela #25x & Six8 Motorsports #68)

P.J. GARGIULO/Ridley Park, Pennsylvania (JHG Racing #5)

CARSON GARRETT/Littleton, Colorado (Broc Garrett #15G)

CHETT GEHRKE/Broken Arrow, Oklahoma (Skip & Diana Matteson #11c)
JIMMY GLENN/Branchburg, New Jersey (Glenn Motorsports #07)
DUSTIN GOLOBIC/Fremont, California (Matt Wood #17G)
SHANE GOLOBIC/Fremont, California (Clauson Marshall/Matt Wood Racing #17w)
TERRY GOODWIN/Belleville, Kansas (Misty Goodwin #2G)
JUSTIN GRANT/Ione, California (Clauson Marshall Racing #39BC)
RYAN GRETH/Newport, Pennsylvania (Wayne Leshner #4R)
FRANKIE GUERRINI/San Rafael, California (Frank Guerrini #63)

H

DEREK HAGAR/Marion, Arkansas (Hagar-Proctor Racing #9JR)
NICK HAMILTON/Danville, Indiana (Mike Hamilton #32)
BOB HARR/Arvada, Colorado (Hamilton Motorsports/Halarr Racing #2)
SCOTT HATTON/Sharon, Wisconsin (Hatton Motorsports #1)
RON HAZELTON/Chatsworth, California (Ron Hazelton #15)
COLTON HEATH/Marysville, Washington (Colton Heath Motorsports #99)
JOSH HECKMAN/Auburn, Pennsylvania (Randy Heckman #12)
MIKE HESS/Riverton, Illinois (Jim Neuman #3H & Chuck Johnson #82)
ERIC HEYDENREICH/Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania (Rich Heydenreich #11)
SHANE HOLLINGSWORTH/Lafayette, Indiana (Blake Hollingsworth #85)

J

SHAWN JACKSON/Bear, Delaware (Shawn Jackson #7J)
KENNEY JOHNSON/Bethany, Connecticut (Jeff Johnson #46x)
MATT JOHNSON/Edmond, Oklahoma (Central #85)
CHASE JONES/Greenwood, Indiana (Pettry/Goff Motorsports #22)
KYLE JONES/Kennedale, Texas (Jeromy Hefler #04)
ROBBY JOSETT/Santa Clarita, California (Robby Josett #2)
ANTON JULIAN/New Plymouth, New Zealand (Pace Brothers Racing #44)

K

NOAH KEY/Justin, Texas (Scott Key #14K)

TUCKER KLAASMEYER/Paola, Kansas (Dale Klaasmeyer #27)

JOHN KLABUNDE/Fort Calhoun, Nebraska (John Klabunde #77J)

NICK KNEPPER/Bellefonte, Illinois (Steve Knepper #55)

TREVOR KOBYLARZ/Birdsboro, Pennsylvania (RT Racing #14)

MICHAEL KOONTZ/Bloomington, Indiana (Michael Koontz #17K)

BRAD KRAUS/Atlanta, Indiana (Brad Kraus #6B)

TOMMY KUNSMAN/Bethlehem, Pennsylvania (Kunsman Racing #21)

L

KYLE LARSON/Elk Grove, California (Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #1 & Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21)

ANDREW LAYSER/Collegeville, Pennsylvania (Alex Bright Racing #77L)

BRAYTON LYNCH/Springfield, Illinois (Rusty Kunz Racing #1K)

M

CARSON MACEDO/Lemoore, California (Keith Ford #73x)

ANDY MALPOCKER/St. Charles, Missouri (Ken Malpocker #22)

TREY MARCHAM/Newcastle, Oklahoma (Bob Marcham #32)

ROB MARHEFKA/Windber, Pennsylvania (FM Racing Promotions #99)

SHANNON McQUEEN/Bakersfield, California (McQueen Racing #7)

ZACH MIDDLETON/Beloit, Kansas (RKO #43A)

JOE B. MILLER/Millersville, Missouri (Trifecta Motorsports #7u & Brian Grogan #51B)

KENNY MILLER III/Morgantown, Pennsylvania (The Racing Millers #23m)

MATT MITCHELL/Yorba Linda, California (Wiley Miller #75)

SHANE MORGAN/Morton, Illinois (Morgan Motorsports #15m)

CHANCE MORTON/Coweta, Oklahoma (Blane Morton #7MF)

KADE MORTON/Coweta, Oklahoma (Blane Morton #8m)

JOSH MOST/Red Oaks, Iowa (Most Motorsports #92m)

JOEY MOUGHAN/Springfield, Illinois (Joey Moughan #29)

N

TYLER NELSON/Kansas City, Kansas (Cappy Mason #47, Tyler Nelson Racing #88 & Harris Racing #91)

D.J. NETTO/Hanford, California (James & Frank Netto #88N)

JAKE NEUMAN/New Berlin, Illinois (Jim Neuman #3N)

TERRY NICHOLS/Delano, California (Terry Nichols #1p)

O

ASHLEY OERTER/Ellicott, Colorado (RKO #16)

RANDY OERTER/Ellicott, Colorado (RKO #48)

RYAN OERTER/Ellicott, Colorado (RKO #43)

SCOTT ORR/Columbia City, Indiana (Scott Orr #88)

P

RANDI PANKRATZ/Atascadero, California (Wally Pankratz #8)

JUSTIN PECK/Monrovia, Indiana (Kenny & Reva Irwin #7K)

MICHAEL PICKENS/Auckland, New Zealand (Brett & Leigh Morris/Seamount Racing #1NZ & Jerome Rodela #25x)

SCOTT PIEROVICH/Lodi, California (Lance Pierovich #35)

ADAM PIERSON/Bradford, Vermont (Joe Mancini #76E)

DAVID PRICKETT/Fresno, California (Neverlift Motorsports #22Q)

Q

JIMI QUIN/Brisbane, Queensland (Jimi Quin #8GQ)

R

JIM RADNEY/Lemoyne, Pennsylvania (Jim Radney #95)

TYLAR RANKIN/Huntington, Indiana (Tylar Rankin #95)

D.J. RAW/Sydney, New South Wales (RayPro #33)

DAVEY RAY/Davenport, Iowa (RayPro #33)

PAUL RAYNES/Sydney, New South Wales (Seven LLC #7x)

JASON RICE/Danielsville, Pennsylvania (Wayne Rice #57)

COLLIN RINEHART/Colorado Springs, Colorado (Collin Rinehart Racing #20)

TYLER ROBBINS/Collinsville, Illinois (Scott Robbins #35)

DANIEL ROBINSON/Wayne City, Illinois (Team Fifty6x Racing #56 & McCreery Motorsports #57D)

RYAN ROBINSON/Foresthill, California (Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #21 & Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #71)

TONY RONEY/Herculaneum, Missouri (Rich Roney #1T)

CLAYTON RUSTON/Upland, California (CR Motorsports #7R)

S

KORY SCHUDY/Springfield, Missouri (Jon Sawyer Racing #28)

KYLE SCHUETT/Philo, Illinois (Schuett Racing #9K)

ALEX SCHUTTE/Redding, California (Schutte/McElwee Racing #28)

RAY SEACH/Beloit, Wisconsin (Ray Seach #2)

LOGAN SEAVEY/Sutter, California (RAMS Racing #4A)

RYAN SECREST/Wichita, Kansas (Blane Morton #8 & Michael Koontz #17o)

SHAUN SHAPEL/Wichita, Kansas (Shaun Shapel #84s)

HOLLY SHELTON/Sacramento, California (Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #67K)

LANDON SIMON/Tipp City, Ohio (Clover Motorsports #29)

TROY SIMPSON/Fort Collins, Colorado (Hamilton Motorsports #7)

TIM SINER/Dupo, Illinois (Siner-Cyliax Racing #15)

KYLE SMITH/Moorpark, California (Mike Smith #55)

JEFF STASA/Kingman, Kansas (SBR #91)

DANNY STRATTON/Riverside, California (Ron Blondel #98)

CODY SWANSON/Covina, California (Swanson Family #17)

JAKE SWANSON/Anaheim, California (Keith Ford #73)

BRAD SWEET/Grass Valley, California (Dooling/Hayward Motorsports #63x)

T

KEVIN THOMAS JR./Cullman, Alabama (Austin Brown #7B & Petry/Goff Motorsports #25)

TYLER THOMAS/Collinsville, Oklahoma (Brian Thomas #91T)

TANNER THORSON/Minden, Nevada (Keith Kunz/Curb-Agajanian Motorsports #67)

U

CHRIS URISH/Elkhart, Illinois (Tom Casson #77u)

V

MATT VEATCH/McLeansboro, Illinois (Team Fifty6x Racing #56v)

JAKE VERMEER/Bakersfield, California (Johnny Vermeer #87JR)

W

GAGE WALKER/Fairland, Indiana (Brian Walker #7, Cappy Mason #47 & RAB Racing #57)

GLENN WATERLAND/Broomfield, Colorado (Glenn & Hayley Waterland #11cw)

BILLY WEASE/Noblesville, Indiana (Amanda Wease #12w)

CODY WEISENSEL/Sun Prairie, Wisconsin (Kevin Weisensel #20)

KOREY WEYANT/Springfield, Illinois (Bill Allen #9)

TY WILLIAMS/Arcadia, Oklahoma (SBR #91s)

CHRIS WINDOM/Canton, Illinois (Baldwin Brothers Racing #5)

JOEY WIRTH/Waterloo, Illinois (Joey Wirth #77w)

ZEB WISE/Angola, Indiana (Clauson Marshall Racing #39)

BEAR WOOD/New Madison, Ohio (LW Racing #8JR)

Y

TRAVIS YOUNG/Casey, Illinois (Travis Young #11y)

Z

JEFF ZELINSKI/Joliet, Illinois (SFH Racing Development #68)