

Morgan Turpen — Racing's Next First Lady?

Saturday, August 27, 2011: No race fans, it was not Batman and Robin! The Dynamic Duo that I am speaking of featured the nine-time USCS champion Terry Gray and his young teammate, the 18-year-old 2010 USCS National Rookie of the Year, Morgan Turpen. This "Tennessee twosome" (both from the Memphis area) grabbed the first and second spots respectively for the United Sprint Car Series Summer Nationals II Finale at the New Senoia Raceway. This was Gray's fourth USCS feature win of the season and his second win on Senoia's new clay surface.

Gray blasted into the lead at the drop of the green as he outran Lance Moss to the first corner. Matt Linder immediately jumped into the second spot with Turpen, starting on the outside of row two, on his bumper moving to third.

As Gray began to pull away from the field — Linder, Turpen, and Moss put on one heck of a show as they raced wheel-to-wheel for the next six laps! As the old saying goes, you could have thrown a blanket over these three fearless drivers as they were running just inches apart in their open-wheel-winged-rockets at speeds over 100-mph!

Finally, on lap eight, the young Turpen managed to drive under Linder into the second spot and Moss moved past Linder to retake the third position on the tenth lap. The top-five settled out to Gray, Turpen, Moss, Linder, and Johnny Bridges until a caution flew on lap 16 — an unfortunate pile-up that collected Moss.

The restart would see Gray moving back out front with teammate Turpen following in his



tire tracks. Although Morgan was given credit for the fastest lap of the double-header weekend — over 107-mph — she could not catch and challenge Terry in the final 14-laps of the 30-lap affair. It was Linder, Bridges, and Sport Allen rounding out the top-five.

The USCS Summer Nationals proved to be a great show. Even though I have been around racing all of my life, the daring drivers that pilot these open-wheel winged sprint cars always impress me! They are truly racers' racers!

Morgan Turpen — Superstar Potential

Imagine Danica Patrick with grit — an aggressive driving style in which inhibition cannot be found! That's Morgan! When she was running in third, "under the blanket" as described above, she stood firm! Turpen did not lift! Although I hate to say it as a Danica fan, I feel certain that Danica, with her reserved driving style, would have lifted in that situation. (Hey, how many drivers wouldn't?)

Morgan is a petite young woman — a beautiful lady if I may say — with blue eyes and dirty blonde hair. I spoke with her after the race — she presents a quiet confidence while being very friendly and polite — and she has a warm and charismatic charm about her.

She led off this evening's events by winning the USCS 6-lap Speed Dash. She went on to

grab the Wilwood Engineering Hard Charger Award, and the JE Pistons Top Guns Award for her second place finish in the main event.

Turpen won at East Alabama Motor Speedway earlier this year. As of August 27 — she was shown in second place in the USCS National point standings behind (guess who) her veteran-racer teammate, Terry Gray!



Friends, if you get a chance, check out a USCS show and this Dynamic Duo! And watch out for Morgan — a rising star and perhaps racing's next first lady!

- Rocky Sinyard

(Photos by MSA Staff) Continued on Page 11



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