

## WEEK 1 OF THE THURSDAY THUNDER LEGENDS RACING SERIES PRESENTED BY PAPA JOHN'S PIZZA

The 19th season of the Thunder Legends Racing Series presented by Papa John's Pizza kicked off Thursday night at Atlanta Motor Speedway, as more than 80 drivers competed on the quarter-mile Thunder Ring in seven separate racing divisions.

Highlighted with wins by Brody Pope of Harrisonville, Missouri in the Plemons Investments Young Lions Division and his brother, Nolan, in the Atlanta Heart Associates Semi-Pro Division, seven competitors notched Week 1 wins as the 10-race season got underway.

Rolling off the grid first, Ashton Whitener of Monticello led the Wallace Electric Rookie Bandolero Division to the first green flag of the season. After leading the first five laps, contact between Whitener and Keaton Hendrix of Homerville allowed Wilder Etheredge of Albany to take over the lead, where he remained for all of one lap before Suwanee's Shelby Ruark overtook him in Turn 2 on the seventh lap.

Ruark led each of the remaining laps, holding off the field, including a late-charging Whitener, who rallied from the rear of the field to finish second. Savannah Bart of Cumming, Kenny Brady of Marietta and Wil Griffis of Homerville rounded out the top-5 in order.

In the second race of the evening, Connor Younginer of took the pole and led the first two laps of the Plemons Investments Young Lions Division before Brody Pope found an opening on the third lap, passing Younginer and never looking back. After maintaining the lead through three cautions and subsequent restarts, Pope pulled away from the field for an easy victory in the closing laps.

"The car was real good at the beginning, and it started to get a little tight on me at the end," said Pope. "But other than that, it was good."

Pope takes a three-point advantage in the standings into Week 2, ahead of second-place finisher Younginer. Rounding out the race's top-5 were Rafe Slate of Eatonton, Sammy Smith of Johnson, Iowa and Nicholas Waters of Senoia.

The Bandits Division feature saw Clay Thompson of Bowersville take the pole

and lead every lap for a no-doubter Week 1 victory. Putting together strong races behind Thompson were second-place finisher Nathan Jackson of McDonough and Fort Mill, South Carolina's Will Robusto in third.

Nolan Pope completed the family sweep with a win in the Atlanta Heart Associates Semi-Pro Division but not without a fight. Driving from the pole, Pope led a fierce trio including Jensen Jorgensen of Stockbridge and Amber Fleeman of Dacula, each vying for the lead turn-for-turn throughout the first 10 laps.

Midway through the race, heavy contact forced Fleeman and several others from the race, leaving Pope and Jorgensen locked in a tight battle down the stretch.

But Pope managed to keep Jorgensen at bay and crossed the line a car length ahead of him, having led each of the feature's 20 laps.

"It means a lot," said the older Pope of joining his brother in Victory Lane. "It's pretty special."

DJ Canipe of Fallston, North Carolina followed up his six-win performance and season title in the last year's Thursday Thunder Bandits Division with a dominating win in the Live Oak Plantation Outlaws Division Week 1 feature. Canipe led every lap, pacing the field ahead of second-place finisher Blaise Maddox of Locust Grove and the third-place Gauntt Hudgins of Savannah.

Robbie Woodall of McDonough won the pole and led the field to green in the Plemons Investments Masters Division feature, but it was fellow McDonough resident Scott Moseley who led each lap of a caution-free race, claiming his first victory of the season and setting a strong early tone. Woodall held on to finish second, while Mark Swan of Dunwoody, Tina Johnson of Senoia and Bill Plemons, Jr. of Locust Grove rounded out the top-5.

The "main event" Racing Radios Pro Division feature included a number of weather delays due to a passing shower, but in the end, Mason Massey of Douglasville found himself in Victory Lane and the recipient of the largest winning payout in Thursday Thunder history.

"It was awesome," said Massey. "I just



had an awesome car tonight, and I just want to thank the fans for coming out."

Massey led every lap of the 25-lap feature in the only Thursday Thunder division that allows drivers and crews to communicate during the race utilizing two-way radios, despite constant pressure from Thursday Thunder veteran William Martin.

"(Martin) made it kind of hard, but I was able to hold on and get the win," Pope said. "He let me know he was back there, and it's easy to go in (to the corners) too hard here, so I just cut my line and held on for the win."

Martin wound up finishing second, while Kaden Honeycutt of Bret City, Texas placed third to round out the podium.

Below are the complete results from Week 1:

#### Wallace Electric Rookie Bandolero Division

1. Shelby Ruark (Suwanee); 2. Ashton Whitener (Monticello); 3. Savannah Bart (Cumming); 4. Kenny Brady (Marietta); 5. Wil Griffis (Homerville); 6. Justin Campbell (Griffin); 7. Ethan Norfleet (Somerset, KY); 8. Wilder Etheredge (Albany); 9. Mikie Mohwish (Cumming); 10. Chad Seagraves (Douglasville); 11. Keaton Hendrix (Homerville); 12. Cameron Potter (Covington); 13. Grant Thompson (Mobile, AL); 14. Max Brady (Marietta)

#### Plemons Investments Young Lions Division

1. Brody Pope (Harrisonville, MO); 2. Connor Younginer (Stockbridge); 3. Rafe Slate (Eatonton); 4. Sammy Smith (Johnson, IA); 5. Nicholas Waters (Senoia); 6. Cody Hall (Griffin); 7. Lawson Ingold (Social Circle); 8. Harrison Halder (Cumming); 9. Carden Cochran (Ringgold); 10. David Rochester (Lebanon, TN); 11. Cale Hall (Griffin); 12. Canon Cochran (Ringgold); 13. Hunter Johnson (Griffin)

#### Bandits Division

1. Clay Thompson (Bowersville); 2. Nathan Jackson (McDonough); 3. Will Robusto (Fort Mill, SC); 4. Michael

Gannon (Canton); 5. Isabella Robusto (Fort Mill, SC); 6. Ryan Howell (McDonough); 7. Logan Nalley (Canton); 8. Kenneth Henderson (Alto); 9. Max Hennebaul (Monroe); 10. Samantha Bart (Cumming); 11. Holt Halder (Cumming); 12. Ryan Younginer (Jonesboro); 13. Noah Dominy (Greensboro)

#### Atlanta Heart Associates Semi-Pro Division

1. Nolan Pope (Harrisonville, MO); 2. Jensen Jorgensen (Stockbridge); 3. Brandon Brock (Hampton); 4. Jason Treschl (Lagrange); 5. Hudson Halder (Cumming); 6. Jonathan Timms; 7. Miranda Meredith (Locust Grove); 8. Robert Norfleet (Somerset, KY); 9. David Lawrence (Senoia); 10. Giulio Borlenghi (Sao Paulo, Brazil); 11. Amber Fleeman (Dacula)

#### Live Oak Plantation Outlaw Division

1. DJ Canipe (Fallston, NC); 2. Blaise Maddox (Locust Grove); 3. Gauntt Hudgins (Savannah); 4. Blaze Crawford (Fayetteville); 5. Trey Tadrzak (Stockbridge); 6. Gage Roberts (Milledgeville); 7. Annabelle Mohwish (Cumming); 8. Ricky Springer (McDonough); 9. Audrie Ruark (Suwanee); 10. Connor Younginer (Stockbridge); 11. Andrew Dollar (Atlanta)

#### Plemons Investments Masters Division

1. Scott Moseley (McDonough); 2. Robbie Woodall (McDonough); 3. Mark Swan (Dunwoody); 4. Tina Johnson (Senoia); 5. Bill Plemons, Jr. (Locust Grove); 6. Mike Kennedy (Alpharetta); 7. Robert Cheney (Jonesboro); 8. Randy Shubert (Conyers); 9. Tony Armbruster (Covington); 10. Dennis Hecht (Hoschton); 11. Rod Nelson (Oak Ridge, TN); 12. Dennis Aiken (Villa Rica); 13. Bill Whatley (Snelville); 14. Wes Potter (Covington)

#### Racing Radios Pro Division

1. Mason Massey (Douglasville); 2. William Martin (Douglasville); 3. Kaden Honeycutt (Bret City, TX); 4. Michael Womack (Troutman, NC); 5. Currie Pierce (Griffin); 6. Dylan Murry (Cumming); 7. Joshua Hicks (Senoia); 8. Corey Heim (Marietta); 9. Jeff Holden (Gainsville); 10. Dawson Fletcher (Canton); 11. Mike Weed (Franklin); 12. Adam Roberson; 13. Connor Pyle (Concord, NC); 14. Taylor Jorgensen (Stockbridge)

For more information, contact the Atlanta Motor Speedway ticket office at (770) 946-4211, (877) 9-AMS-TIX or visit [www.atlantamotorspeedway.com](http://www.atlantamotorspeedway.com).



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