



## Johnny Pursley's 1st Ultimate Super LM Series Win at Travelers Rest Speedway

Story/Photos: Phillip Prichard, MSA  
Eighteen Super Late Models were on hand at Travelers Rest Speedway on August 15. In the 40 lap feature, Johnny Pursley battled Casey Roberts and Dennis "Rambo" Franklin for the victory. The three were three wide a numerous times, providing the packed house of fans with the most exciting race of the evening.

The race had five official lead changes but there were many more. Pursley of Clover, SC earned the \$4000 first place prize money in the Whitney Whitesides Memorial Race. It had been more than 5 years since Super Late Models had raced at the Travelers Rest Speedway. This was the first ever visit for the Ultimate Super Late Model Series. The track had five other features plus the Ultimate's.

The event drew 18 of the region's best drivers to compete for the M&W Transport Haulin' It Pole Award. Current ULTIMATE Super Late Models Series point leader Casey Roberts of Toccoa, GA secured the pole with a time of 15.225 seconds on the 3/8 Mile oval earning him the \$200 Pole Award. Pursley was second quick followed by Dennis "Rambo" Franklin; Tim Allen and Anthony Sanders in qualifying.

Casey Roberts opted to start from the outside of the front row with Pursley on the inside for the 40-lap race. Casey Roberts was able to grab the lead upon exiting Turn 2. Pursley and Franklin battled back and forth for the second spot until Lap 8 when Dustin Mitchell got turned in Turn 2 bringing out the yellow flag. On the Dixie Double-file restart, Franklin and Pursley continued to battle for the second position with Pursley gaining the spot. Pursley was at times, 3/10ths of a second faster than Roberts enabling him to reel in the leader. Pursley was able to take the low line and pull alongside of Roberts. The close quarters racing allowed Franklin to join the pursuit and at times the three were three abreast. On Lap 13, Pursley was able to clear Roberts for the #1 position. Roberts and Franklin were running the top line with Pursley low; the trio was wheel to wheel on Lap 15. Franklin edged Pursley by 0.002 second. On Lap 19, Pursley working the inside groove in his Barry Wright machine was able to grab the lead again. Franklin was able to get passed Roberts and Rambo was closing in on Pursley. On Lap 22, Franklin was able to get around Pursley as the caution flew again for Jordy Nipper slowing in Turn 2. Pursley regain the lead since the field had not completed the lap.

On the restart, Pursley was able to get away, distancing himself from Franklin and Roberts. Pursley maneuvered through lap traffic, capturing the checkered flag. Johnny Pursley stated it was fun racing with Casey and Rambo like we did. Those guys aren't going to give you anything but they will race you clean. This was Johnny Pursley's first win in the Ultimate Super Late Model Series.

Scott Shirey received The PPM Racing Products Hard Charger of the Race Award; he started 17th and finished 7th. The Schaeffer's Oil by Keith Brady Slick Race Award went to Dennis "Rambo" Franklin. The AR Bodies Hard Luck Award went to Anthony Sanders who lost oil pressure on the pace laps.



## "Fast and Furious Friday" at Lavonia Speedway

Story/Photos: Phillip Prichard, MSA  
September 4th was the "Fast and Furious Friday at Lavonia Speedway with a full slate of the regular classes of racing plus the United Sprint Car Series.

22 year old Morgan Turpen (The Nation's top ranked female sprint car driver) won the Hoosier Tire Speed Dash in the 10M. Coming into Lavonia, Turpen was tied with veteran and 11-time United Sprint Car Series National Champion Terry Gray in the 2015 USCS National title chase. She finished 6th in the feature event.

The USCS feature belonged Johnny Bridges who was the provisional pole-sitter after scoring the most passing points in heat race action, and after a zero was rolled on the K&N Inversion Die, he also received the K&N Filters Pole Award.

Bridges, the 1998 United Sprint Car Series K&N Rookie of the Year raced to his second 2015 series win. Bridges had to hold off defending series champion Terry Gray in the process. While many drivers were

close on fuel in the closing laps, Bridges, from Cherryville, NC, stayed cool under pressure and led all 30 laps from the K&N Filters Pole Position to score the win.

The night was plagued by two red flags and six additional cautions that made for challenging conditions for the 21-car field, with current USCS Southern Thunder regional points leader Eric Riggins Jr. running out of fuel with four laps to go bringing out the final yellow of the night.

Two red flags were displayed twice before racing could really get established, first at lap two when Montgomery, Alabama's Kyle Emerson went flipping in turn two and again on the ensuing restart when Brandon McLain went for a similar tumble at the exit of turn four. Both drivers were uninjured.

Gray chased Bridges the entire distance in his Don Berry Construction No. 10 sprinter, but could never get close enough on any of the night's restarts to challenge for the trophy. The Bartlett, TN veteran finished second and unofficially took the national points lead away from his teammate Morgan Turpen in the process.

Bridges' cousin Lance Moss, also from Cherryville, NC, rounded out the podium in the K&N Filters Podium awarding third place. The 2008 series Rookie of the Year Anthony Nicholson following him to the finish line in fourth. Three-time 2015 season feature winner Marshall Skinner from Marion, Arkansas completed the top five.

Steve "Hot Rod" LaMance was the dominator in the FASTRAK Pro Late Model Series. "Hot Rod" earned the pole and led flag-to-flag for the victory. Clayton Turner in the 102 was the Limited Late Model Winner.

The Georgia State Championships will be November 13-15, Check out <http://www.lavoniaspeedway.net/> for more details.



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