

FLETCHER CASHES IN ON BONUS POINTS OPPORTUNITY

The drivers of the Thursday Thunder Legends Series Presented by Papa John's Pizza cranked up the intensity once again for week 3. A couple of new winners, a streak broken, and the first cash in for the bonus points opportunity in the VP Racing Fuels Pro Division, had fans on their feet all night long.

The Rookie Bandoleros Division kicked off the night with an upset victory. Dallas' Bryson Matthews charged up to the front at the beginning of the race, while Acworth's Lee Brown followed close behind. A misstep on the part of Matthews led to Brown taking over the lead. Both Brown and Matthews got too close for comfort, rubbing doors during the closing laps. As the leaders were battling it out, Shelby Schell of Dublin snuck around the two to take the lead and ultimately the win.

The Chargers Division took to the track next, with a three-car shootout. Max Hennebaul, heralding from Monroe shot out to the front as the green flag waved. However, Woodstock's Hayden Swank would not be left behind in the dust. Swank and Hennebaul fought for the lead until the very end, where Hennebaul ended up taking home the victory.

The GRT Racing Driver Development Outlaws Division saw a nonstop battle for the lead between Blaise Maddox from Locust Grove, and Marietta's own back-to-back winner, Kenny Brady. Maddox jumped out front at the get go with Brady prowling in the third position. As Brady jumped into the second position, it seemed as if Maddox's time up front would be short-lived. However, Maddox held tight to his lead, bumping and sliding against Brady for the coveted position. Scraping together during the entirety of the final lap, Maddox pulled away just enough to lock in his first win of the season and put an end to Kenny Brady's win streak.

The racing veterans of the Masters Division took the green flag with Locust Grove native Bill Plemons Jr. leading the way. The battle between himself and McDonough's Robbie Woodall continued on throughout the event as they battled for the prime position and points lead. Woodall caught up fast to Plemons, tapping his bumper along the way. Plemons continued his leading ways throughout the feature. A mistake from Mark Swan of Athens and Dennis Hecht from Hoschton ended the event under the caution and checkered flags awarding Bill Plemons his second victory of the 2018 season.

Plemons now has a steady points lead over Robbie Woodall. Woodall, who finished in the second position, will fight to bounce back from the points deficit next week.

The young up-and-comers of the Bandits Division lit up the track for their 20-lap feature. A couple of faulty starts led to Carson Ruark from Suwanee running away with the lead after the green flag officially dropped. Locust Grove's Ryan Younginer would not



give up so easily as he battled Ruark in the turns of the "Thunder Ring" throughout the feature. Ruark would prove to be the best in the field as he pulled away for the win.

The stars shone bright during the 25-lapper feature of the VP Racing Fuels Division. With the option to choose where to start in the field in order to try to earn bonus points, last week's winner and Canton's own Dawson Fletcher, chose to start last. Although Griffin's Cody Hall took the initial lead away from Eatonton's Rafe Slate, it was obvious that Fletcher was out to capitalize on his good fortune. Making his way up to fourth with just five laps in, the frontrunners of Hall, Jorgensen, and Slate began to feel the pressure. Fletcher seized the third position away from Slate on the sixth lap. By lap 20, Fletcher had passed Stockbridge's Jensen Jorgensen and Hall. Fletcher ran with the lead and captured his second straight win of the season.

"I knew we had a great car thanks to Doug Stevens who has been perfect the past couple of weeks, explained Fletcher. "I felt confident in the car and knew that if I was slow and picked my way up to the front I might be able to get it."

When asked why he chose to start last Fletcher said, "We missed one race and if we want to be in contention for points this is what we had to do. We had to start in the back and bring it to the front."

Last week was scheduled to be a one-off race for Fletcher, which has now turned into two weeks running and winning. He was asked if he would make a run for the championship. Fletcher gave his thoughts on the possibility, "I'm not sure yet, it depends on how my schedule goes. But as of now, I think we might give it a shot! It was a last second decision to come out and make a run at it tonight and it was a great decision. Hopefully we'll be able to collect points for that."

Grandstand admission for the affordable, family-friendly Thursday Thunder Legends Series Presented by Papa John's Pizza cost just \$5 per person, with kids 5 and under admitted free. For more information about both Friday Night Drags and Thursday Thunder, contact the Atlanta Motor Speedway ticket office at (770) 946-4211, (877) 9-AMS-TIX or visit www.atlantamotorspeedway.com.

TT/FND stories & photos courtesy of AMS

THRILLING WEEK 5 ACTION HEATS UP THE AMS DRAG STRIP



Working to either capitalize or improve on last week's results, the competitors of the O'Reilly Auto Parts Friday Night Drags series congregated on a steamy Georgia night at the Atlanta Motor Speedway drag strip for week 5 competition.

One competitor who strongly focused on adding to his points lead was QuikTrip Pro Division driver Kevin Mayo from McDonough. Mayo swept all rounds in his division earning his second straight points win of the season.

"Everything was good, I swept all rounds", explained Mayo. "The whole night was very nice."

Mayo touched on his strategy to avoid issues at the start, "The main thing was to go in and not turn the red light on. I saw a lot of guys going in and turning on the red light, which gets you disqualified before making a start. I just wanted to sit back and not do that."

Mayo's week 2 win has extended his points lead, placing him at the very top of the championship standings.

A surprise victory came in the Super Pro Division, as last week's winner, Robert Cheney in his classic 2014 American Dragster faced off against the 1955 Chevy driven by Mike Weaver. As both drivers swept through their competitors, the final faceoff between the two had fans and fellow drivers alike on their feet. Mike Weaver made the run of the night, defeating Cheney in style.

"Not much to say really", said Weaver. "I was just determined to beat him [Cheney], so I cranked up the speed to do that."

Other notable winners include Courtney Perry from Covington, driving the 1995 Honda Del Sol in the Sport Compact Division. Locust Grove's Dustin Prett took home the trophy in the Street Modified Division, thanks to the muscle in his 1989 Ford

Mustang.

This week's Peach Pass Burnout Zone Competition zeroed in on the Summit Racing Equipment Sportsman Division. Tonight's victor came from nearby Locust Grove. Nick Blankenship and his Mustang put on a smoke show for the thousands in attendance during the final round of the contest, leaving them cheering for more.

Full June 15 Results:

Super Pro: Mike Weaver (Griffin), 1955 Chevy
 QuikTrip Pro: Kevin Mayo (McDonough), 1969 Chevy Nova
 Harbin's Mechanical Services Street Outlaw: Daniel Harris (Griffin), 1995 Chevrolet 1-10
 Summit Racing Equipment Sportsman: Scott Charette (Locust Grove), 1995 Pontiac Firebird
 New Edge: Chase Ponder (Senoia), 2010 Ford Mustang
 Street Performer: Brandon Sampler (Griffin), 1995 Chevrolet S-10
 Harding Plumbing, Heating, and Cooling Domestic: David Smith (Jackson), 1990 Isuzu
 Street Modified: Dustin Prett (Locust Grove), 1989 Ford Mustang
 Diamond Resorts Factory Street: Chad Greenway, 2001 Pontiac Firebird
 Diesel Truck: Taylor Wilder (Locust Grove), 1994 Dodge Ram
 Starfire Automatic Gates Truck: Ed Blanford (McDonough), 1968 Ford F-100
 Tuner: Steven Mallet (Marietta), 2004 Subaru WRX
 Sport Compact: Courtney Perry (Covington), 1995 Honda Del Sol
 Super Bike: Cory Mayo (Fayetteville), 2009 Hayabusa Suzuki
 Sport Bike: Robin Malcolm (Lithonia), 2006 GSXR 1000
 US Marine Corps Motorcycle: Keith Stamps (Tyronne), 2002 Honda
 Cruiser/Motorcycle: Robert Thomas (Griffin), Harley Davidson
 ATV: Bradley Smith (Griffin), 1990 Yamaha Banshee
 Peach Pass Burnout Zone: Nick Blankenship (Locust Grove), Mustang