

Season Titles decided and Champions crowned at Senoia Raceway

(Senoia, GA – September 15, 2019) In an unprecedented Championship Night at Senoia Raceway, four season points titles were on the line entering the final night of points racing. Several drivers had the opportunity to race their way to a prestigious championship and etch their names into the fifty year history of the 3/8ths mile speed plant just west of Senoia, Georgia.

“It takes a lot of sacrifice and dedication to win a season championship in auto racing,” explained track promoter Mayes Massey. “The points race opens in April and it is a long stretch with a lot of twists and turns to get to the end of the road. It’s a true statement to our competitors to have so many championships to be decided on the final points night.”

Four championships came down to the final night of the season. A couple actually took until the final lap of the final race and one had to be double and triple checked to verify the final outcome.

The closest race entering Saturday night’s affair was in the Late Model Sportsman division. Locust Grove’s Jason Williams held a slim seven point advantage over Newnan’s sixteen-year-old female racer McKenna Nelms. The margin created a race that whichever driver finished in front of the other in the main event would win the season title. Williams started the race on the outside of the second row while Nelms was placed on the inside of row three.

At the drop of the green, Williams moved quickly to third behind only Byron’s Wiley McDaniel and Locust Grove’s Jamie Nicholson, Jr. Nelms was caught up in a fierce battle with Macon’s Brandon McDaniel that allowed Franklin’s Chris Steele to gain a shot at the inside coming off turn four. Steele slid up the track and bumped Nelms which resulted in her dropping back a spot before regaining her speed.

A couple of laps later Steele again slipped up the track coming out of the final turn and squeezed Florida’s Nevin Gainey against the front stretch wall. Gainey climbed the concrete and rode on two wheels for a hundred yards before coming back on to the track, but connected to Steele. The wild crash ended the night for both hard charging drivers.

McDaniel controlled the pace for the duration of the race while his younger brother

Brandon gave a little pressure late in the race. Jamie Nicholson, Jr. ended his season on a strong note collecting yet another top three finish while Williams held off all challenges from Nelms to post a fourth place with Nelms directly behind him in fifth. The one position difference secured the season points title for Williams who also won a season points title at Senoia Raceway in 2012 in the Limited Late Model class.

It was a catch me if you can scenario in the Bomber division on championship night. Brooks’ Curtis Turner held a nineteen point lead over Senoia’s Dustin Smith when the night began. Turner qualified fastest. Smith qualified second. Turner shot out to the lead early in the feature. Smith ran second. Turner led flag to flag and Smith ran second for the entire 15 laps and that secured the season title for Turner. Smith was second in the race and second in the points after stealing the points lead for a month in late July and early August. Griffin’s Larry Pierce ended up third in the race, as well as, third in the final points ranking.

In the Hot Shots, seventeen year old rookie Robert Holder came into the night with a forty-five point lead and needed to finish sixth or better to lock in the championship. Locust Grove’s Cory Wilson was happy to see more Hot Shots in the pit area than this year’s average which he felt would give him a better opportunity to gain the needed points to overtake Holder.

He was correct in his pre-race thought as he pushed his car to the front while Holder struggled to stay in the top ten for most of the night. Marietta’s Rick ‘Super Fly’ Ricks worked his racer to the front on lap nine bypassing Alabama’s Jordan Wallace to snag the lead. Cory Wilson tried to push Wallace another spot back, but Wallace fought through the challenges.

Ricks went on to win the Hot Shot feature and pocket the bonus purse that was offered the class. Wallace ended up second ahead of Wilson. Holder ended up ninth which also left him short in the points chase. Wilson’s third place run garnered him enough points to move past Holder and into the point’s lead and capturing a season points championship for the front wheel drive division.

“That was a crazy finish to make up that many points on the final night of the season,” Mayes Massey said. “Every night matters in



the chase for a title. First or last, all the races matter.”

Massey’s brother Marty Massey of Winston knows that too well as he was broiled in a points race as well in the Crate Late Model division. Massey was trying to secure his second straight title, but had been struggling for the past month and half. Those struggles allowed fellow Winston driver Landon Bagby to close the separation before the final night. Bagby would need another night of struggles for Massey coupled together with a good night for himself. A field of twenty-five Crate Late Model cars saw both Massey and Bagby start mid-pack with plenty of opportunity for something to go right or something go wrong quickly.

The start of the race would see fast qualifier Dylan Knowles from Lannett, Alabama jump out to the lead over Douglasville’s Mason Massey, nephew of Marty and promoter Mayes Massey’s son. The young guns ran side by side in the turns with Knowles gaining the advantage over Mason on the straightaways. The remainder of the field jostled three and a few times even four wide for position.

Massey chose to run the high side line just inches from the exterior concrete wall while Knowles was running down at the bottom of the track. Massey moved past Knowles on lap four only to lose the position back two laps later.

Senoia’s Bubba Pollard ran third while Copper Hill, Tennessee hot shoe Jason Deal was fourth. Temple teenager Austin Aldridge was in the hunt throughout the night as was Eastonolee’s Matthew Wyatt and LaGrange’s Jake Traylor. Not far behind this battle was Landon Bagby who was beginning his assault

on the top ten.

As Knowles extended his lead over Mason Massey and Massey was safely in front of Pollard, the race to watch was for fourth place with Wyatt, Aldridge and Deal. The three were three wide coming out of the fourth turn with two laps to go and fought back and forth for the last two circuits. Knowles won the race, Mason Massey was second, Pollard third with Wyatt beating Aldridge to the line by a tenth of a second for fourth. Deal ended up a close sixth with Bagby climbing to seventh. Points leader Marty Massey ended up in 13th position, but it was enough to hoist the championship trophy for the second straight year as Bagby’s stellar climb through the field came up two positions short of where he needed to finish.

In the Limited Late Models, Senoia’s Clint Smith jumped behind the wheel of a racecar that had been sitting on jack stands for over a year and did not miss a beat powering to the feature victory. Smith worked past Newnan’s Oliver Gentry who had qualified the fastest earlier in the evening on lap five and then never looked back. Gentry would finish his best since the track changed over to the slick gray gumbo in second while LaGrange’s Dennis Hale was third. Fayetteville’s Glenn Morris finished in fourth ahead of Meansville’s Mad-die Crane and Cartersville’s Jacques Daniel. The sixth place finish by Daniel provided the needed points to become the Season Points Champion in the Limited Late Model class.

For the full article and schedule along with ticket prices, reserved seating, camping, special attractions, promotions and additional information, visit the track website at www.senoiaraceway.com or call the speedway at 770.599.6161.

