

(Medford, Jay Reese-[www.sosportstalk.com](http://www.sosportstalk.com))

Rogue River's Jon DeBenedetti started next to pole sitter (2006 Antioch Champion) Kellen Chadwick to begin the 3<sup>rd</sup> richest (\$40,000 purse) dirt Modified race in the country this summer, and by turn-3 the three time Northwest Mod Champ stormed in to the lead which he never relinquished enroute to winning the 12<sup>th</sup> annual 'Lon Skinner Memorial' at Southern Oregon Speedway in White City, Oregon.

DeBenedetti in the Ron Martin Racing stars and stripes Loose Gruf chasis built a half-track lead over (#77) Dan Estremado by the 16<sup>th</sup> circle, and was closing in on lapping the 9<sup>th</sup> place car when the 2-time local track champion led 9-cars, on the lead lap, to the checkered flag in the shortened race.

*"The car stayed together unlike last year. I said a little prayer with 10 to go, and started counting, then I figured that was a bad idea, and I might want to just drive."*

The former Dwarf car champion pocketed \$10,000 for the win.

*"I'm just grateful to be here. I'm sorry for those cars that got upside down as they are all fast cars, too. And, I want to thank Ron Martin, and his wife Jonnie, who have been there through thick and thin with me. We're just fortunate as the guys gave me a great car, and we ended up with a good race track."*

The event was originally scheduled for 100-laps with an intermission planned after 50-laps. However, because of an 8-car wreck that occurred at the flag stand nearing the completion of the opening lap, and the subsequent long delay to get proper emergency medical help in a timely manner to injured driver (#3T) Todd Hermosillo, and to remove 3 totaled cars from the track, the event was cut short by Skinner Promotions even though the drivers voiced their opinion to want to run the full 100 circuits.

Many fans left in an outcry feeling slighted by the decision to cut the premier event. Earlier this year, the speedway's other promoter, Rapp Promotional Management, ended a NSCS feature race early facing a weekday 10pm curfew. In contrast, just last week, both Skagit Speedway in Alger, Washington, and Grays Harbor Raceway in Elma, Washington completed the World of Outlaws main events well after midnight which sent fans home fulfilled.

Hermosillo, who has 4 Top-5 finishes at Watsonville this year, was knocked unconscious initially, then regained his faculties enough to complain of numbness. He was transported to a local hospital where he was treated and released. His car, along with 2003 Lon Skinner winner (#12S) Dennis Silva, and (#6P) Travis Peery's car were totaled in the fracas. Also sustaining damage was 3-time Chico Champ (#10M) Ryan McDaniel, 2004 California UMP champ (#51L) Scott Lenz, (#7) Travis Holt, (#1M) John Skinner, and (#87) Jeff Hudson.

A heart broken Peery in his new Rayburn Racecar offered these words to the crowd over the public address system. *"I'm okay, but that's the last you fans will see of me for awhile as this is the third car we've gone through this year."*

Every car on the outside of rows four through 10 collected each other, along with Holt who started inside of row-7, when apparently some lead cars checked up coming off turn-4 causing the chain reaction.

*"My car came off turn-4 pretty good and I just started to accelerate when I saw in front of me some cars hit the skids and get sideways, and in to the wall, and over each other, so I just darted to the infield and parked it."* Offered (#68) Chris Charlton who witnessed the incident from the very last row.

The race resumed at 12:34 am with still over 3,000 fans anxiously waiting to see the shootout expected which featured than 11 track champions in the original 24-car field. When the green flagged dropped again, there were 19 cars left in the shootout.

Watsonville champion (#2) Bobby Hogge IV finished second and claimed \$5,000 for his efforts starting fifth. Pole sitter (#27) Antioch champion Kellen Chadwick finished a close third, and (#66) Watsonville's Paul Stone who has 2 feature wins placed fourth. Rounding out the top-5 was veteran Marysville driver, and former Chico champ (#1) Randy McDaniel.

*"I really don't like starting on the pole, but was disappointed we didn't get to run 100 laps as I set my car up for the track to change later on in the night, but that's how it goes I guess,"* said Chadwick after the race who travels to Iowa to compete in the week-long 25<sup>th</sup> IMCA Super Nationals at Boones Speedway with a total purse of \$275,000 dollars. Then, the following Monday, Chadwick heads to North Carolina where he has a tryout with an owner of a Nascar Craftsman Truck team.

*"Yah, I'm kind of happy, but I would have loved to go 100, but I guess we'll take it considering we broke just about everything we could last night."* Added McDaniel enjoying a cold beverage.

The defending LSM champion, and current Southern Oregon Speedway points leader (#28M) Mark Wauge started 9<sup>th</sup> and was beginning to wheel his way forward to 6<sup>th</sup> when he got tangled up on lap-33 in turn-3. Gold Hill's (#77) Dan Estremado who was fast all weekend, and (#50) Tom Glover both went out with a flat tire at the same time. Two other yellow flags came out previously halting the race.

74 Mods entered the 2-day event, and many of them plan to head to Tulare, California's 'Thunderbowl' September 27-29 for the \$20,000 to win U.S. Western Mod Nationals.

A-Main Finish: Jon DeBenedetti, Bobby Hogge, Kellen Chadwick, Paul Stone, Randy McDaniel, Jesse Williamson, Scott Lenz, Curtis Towns, Justin Holt, Lenny Toolanen, Travis Holt, Chris Charlton, Dan Estremado, Monte Bischoff, Don Muth, Tom Glover, Matt Duste, Mark Wauge, Ryan McDanile, Jeff Hudson, Travis Peery, Dennis Silva, John Skinner, Todd Hermosillo.

B-Winner= Lenny Toolanen

C-Winner= Albert Gill

D-Winner= Rusty Azevedo

Dash-1 Winner= Jon DeBenedetti

Dash-2 Winner= Kellen Chadwick

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