



KALAMAZOO Speedway

TRACK TALK

February 15, 2017



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!!!!

First open testing/practice in 59 days!
Only 72 more days until opening night!!

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Kyle Busch (2014)
Kalamazoo Speedway

KYLE BUSCH TO RACE AT THE KLASH

We are reminded of the unanticipated start to the shotgun-start footrace for Super Shoe campsites. A play was developed: Ready, Set and the firing off of a shotgun to signify Go. You know, just like the Olympics. Ready went as orchestrated. Set was looking good. Then someone (yes we know they wore a staff T-shirt) honked the horn in the pace car to signify all was set and the shotgun should fire to start the race. Of course everyone started racing at the honk and rifle firing was nothing more than something to rattle the neighbors. Best laid plans! So fast forward and here we are again. Kalamazoo Klash XXV sponsor, West Michigan Toyota Dealers, was in place. Kyle Busch was confirmed and already working with Senneker Performance. Few people knew this was in the works to prevent leaks until we could make the big announcement. And then this past weekend, Kyle enthusiastically announced he was driving in the Klash. And then the calls started to Gary Howe, then write-ups started appearing in print, on websites, on Facebook. What can we say? We may be bringing up the rear in making the announcement but Superstar Kyle Busch will be returning to Kalamazoo Speedway for Kalamazoo Klash XXV on Wednesday, August 9. And here's a little more about that!

We are off to a fast start toward making Kalamazoo Klash XXV live up to Circle Track Magazine naming the Klash as one of the top 5 short track events in the nation. Before a single ticket has been sold, Kalamazoo Klash XXV, presented by the West Michigan Toyota Dealers, is sure to be a sellout. Track owner/promoter, Gary Howe, noted that having the West Michigan Toyota Dealers onboard made it possible for the Speedway to host Kyle Busch for the 25th running of the Kalamazoo Klash quipping that Toyota's tag line of "Let's Go Places" is perfect for how the event is shaping up.

Busch, the 2015 NASCAR Monster Energy Cup Champion, will be piloting a Senneker Performance car for the 125 lap Super Late Model feature race and his own ARCA/CRA Super Series car for the second feature race on the program, also 125 laps. Senneker Performance is the same company that builds cars for 5 time Klash winner, Terry Senneker, Jr. As the record crowd saw in 2014 when Busch last visited the Speedway, driving his way to victory lane in the ARCA/CRA Super Series race, he is a fierce competitor.

Busch, 31, first got behind a steering wheel at age six. In 2004 he was named Rookie of the Year for the NASCAR Xfinity Series and named Rookie of the Year for the Monster Energy Series in 2005. He earned his first Monster Energy Cup Championship for Joe Gibbs Racing in 2015, doing so in an unorthodox manner. He started the 2015 season by breaking his leg and ankle in the Xfinity race in Daytona. Busch received a waiver from NASCAR allowing him to be eligible to compete for the Championship only if he won a race and made it into the top-30 in driver points. By the time Busch was able to return to racing, he'd missed 11 points events, leaving only 15 races to meet the terms of the waiver. Busch went on to own the 2015 season, putting together a streak of four wins in five weeks. The season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway was a four driver winner-take-all race with Busch winning the race and the series championship. Busch also won the 2009 Xfinity Series Championship, making him one of only four drivers to win the top two tiers of NASCAR racing. In 2014, Kyle Busch Motorsports won its 3rd Camping World Truck Series Owners Championship.



“Rowdy” Kyle Busch: NASCAR Champion and regular guy!

Information about how to purchase tickets and VIP wristbands for reserved seating, dinner and a private autograph session with Kyle Busch will be available in March with ticket sales beginning in April. Suite rentals and large groups wanting to reserve a hospitality deck may be booked now by calling (269) 692-2423.

ENGINE OF THE WEEK

We don't typically include articles from other sources, but this February 7, 2017 article tells a nice story and we thought you might be interested. Reprinted with permission.

EVERNHAM DODGE V8 RACE ENGINE

By Greg Jones, Managing Editor (Engine Builder Magazine)

Steve Hogue of Hogue Racing Engines knows a thing or two about small block Chevy engines, as 99 percent of the business his shop does revolves around those power plants. However, when something different comes in the door, the shop gets excited to work on something 'new.'

Just a few weeks ago, Steve got one of those opportunities when he got a call from a customer in South Bend, Indiana who had an Evernham Dodge Race Engine that needed work. Steve hadn't done work for this particular customer before, but a few of the customer's buddies recommended he take his engine to Steve at Hogue Racing Engines in Akron, Indiana.



"We had never done this engine before," Steve says. "We had done similar ones to it, but not this specific one. Because this was a Dodge and not a Chevy, it was an intriguing project and was different than what we normally do."

According to Steve, this specific Evernham engine only runs two or three times a year at the Kalamazoo Call of the Wild Race, which is a 'run-what-you-brung' kind of race where you put the big side boards on and see how fast you can turn a lap.

"The customer said the engine had been smoking a little and this year they weren't getting many RPMs out of it," Hogue says. "The valve springs were worn out and the rings were shot."

Steve runs Hogue Racing Engines along with his dad Bruce. Steve, as with every job, made sure to tear the V8 engine apart and check over everything.

"We will re-hone the cylinders and do a sturdy valve job on it and install new valve springs," Steve says. "With a job like this, the pistons are made for that style engine with a specific ring package, and sometimes trying to track down a special ring package can be challenging."

Hogue eventually tracked down some JE Pro Seal rings that fit the bill. The engine also got new bearings from Clevite, valve springs from Isky, and spark plugs from NGK.



All said and done, this Evernham Dodge race engine will be putting out around 700 hp and will be put back in a late model race car, ready to tackle the Kalamazoo Call of the Wild race once again.

Engine of the Week is sponsored by Cometic Gasket.

Editor's Note: To view this engine in action at Kalamazoo Speedway in 2015, return to the e-mail and click on the link.

SUPER LATE MODEL TOURING SERIES

Coming in 2017 is the Sweet Manufacturing Outlaw Super Late Model series. The series will consist of six existing marquee events at the five different tracks: Kalamazoo Speedway (MI), Berlin Raceway (MI), Flat Rock Speedway (MI), Toledo Speedway (OH) and New Paris Speedway (IN). Outlaw Super Late Model drivers will be chasing contingency prizes plus a \$20,000-point fund while the five tracks retain total control over their events. Sweet Manufacturing is putting up the \$20,000 to draw more racers to compete in each of the six marquee events.

“Outlaw Super Late Model racing holds a special place in my heart,” said Sweet Manufacturing Outlaw Super Late Model Series Co-Director Shawn McLaughlin. “I feel like this is one of, if not the biggest thing to ever happen to Outlaw Super Late Model racing. The opportunity to work with these other incredible promoters is truly an honor.” McLaughlin is the racing co-director at Kalamazoo Speedway and is co-director with Gary Howe, owner/promoter of Kalamazoo Speedway, for the Touring Series.



“Sweet Manufacturing and all of its employees are incredibly proud to be able to support the racers that support us,” said Joe Metzger, Sweet Manufacturing Sales Director. “Randy Sweet has always shown a passion and dedication to Motorsports in general and definitely to Outlaw Late Models.”

The six races included in the 2017 series follow:

- 🌸 Wednesday, June 14: Gary Terry “Follow Your Dreams” 125 (Kalamazoo Speedway)
- 🌸 Saturday, July 8: Lee Anderson Memorial (Berlin Raceway)
- 🌸 Saturday, July 22: Stan Yee Memorial (Flat Rock Speedway)
- 🌸 Thursday, August 3: Summer Sizzler (New Paris Speedway)
- 🌸 Wednesday, August 9: Kalamazoo Klash XXV (Kalamazoo Speedway)
- 🌸 Saturday, September 16: Glass City 200 where a series champion will be crowned following the 100 lap feature for the Outlaw SLMs.

The top three finishers in the series will receive trophies for their efforts. Competitors will be competing on Hoosier slick racing tires.

Stay tuned for more information about the inaugural Sweet Manufacturing Outlaw Super Late Model Series.

Quotes provided courtesy of Brandon Paul, Speed51.com Editor

HOWE WINS STATE PROMOTER AWARD

Gary Howe, Speedway owner/promoter, has been named the 2016 Promoter of the Year by the Michigan Speedway Promoters Association. Howe has won this award twice in the past. Howe and his family were out of town during the 51st Annual Michigan Automobile Racing Fan Club ceremonies where the award was to be presented and will receive his award at the March meeting of the Association.

Two drivers who have had recent success at Kalamazoo Speedway were also recognized at the ceremonies. Tyler Roahrig, winner of the 2016 Intimidator 100 and the inaugural Gary Terry "Follow Your Dreams, 125 was named Pavement Driver of the Year and Jeff Ganus, Kalamazoo Klash XXIII winner, was recognized as the ARCA Gold Cup Late Model Series Champion.

Gary and Donna Howe have also been named Regional Promoter of the Year, receiving this award in 2010 and 2014 before going on to win the national Auto Racing Promoter of the Year award in 2014.

The Auto Racing Promoter of the Year is short track (paved or dirt) racing's most prestigious award and is the only national award recognizing promotional excellence where selection is made by other promoters. Voting is conducted in two phases: a preliminary ballot in the Racing Promotion Monthly newsletter nominates candidates in the six regions. The six candidates become Regional Promoters of the Year and then appear on a second ballot for final voting to determine the national Auto Racing Promoter of the Year. Only one person has won the national award more than once. The 41st Auto Racing Promoter of the Year award will be announced during the 44th Annual Racing Promoter's workshop in Daytona Beach as part of the events leading up to the 2017 Daytona 500.

SERVING UP JUSTICE – CIRCUIT COURT STYLE

Franklyn Holmes, one of the two men, arrested for the August break in at the Speedway, was sentenced to prison for a minimum of 19 months and a maximum of 15 years. He is now in custody. His partner in these felonies was Tony Vandenberg. He was scheduled to go on trial on January 10; however, this was adjourned due a plea agreement. Vandenberg will be sentenced later this month.



THE PLACE TO BE FOR FAST, CLEAN, FAMILY FUN!