



# KALAMAZOO Speedway TRACK TALK August 16, 2017



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## THIS FRIDAY: AUGUST 18 AT THE RACES

- ALL DIVISIONS RACE
- PRE-RACE AUTOGRAPHS
- PRE-RACE BACKPACK GIVEAWAY



How can this possibly be? This is the **LAST** night of the weekly race program before Season Championship Night (next Friday). Join us in the infield to meet up with your favorite drivers, get their autographs or take a photo or two. Plus it's the annual Back-2-School Backpack Giveaway. Both events run from 6:30 to 7:15. Adam VanAvery (pictured) signs an autograph for a young fan at last year's event.

We lost the August 4 races to rain, so the very tight point battles in both the Flip Flop Cyber Stocks and the Pro Stocks are just as tight as they were after the July 28 races. Nick Failing has a slim 2 point lead over Tony



LoBretto and Valerie Bozell is down by only 14 in the Flip Flop Cyber Stock division. These 3 drivers have traded the points lead all season long (pictured the #4 of Failing, the #24 of LoBretto

and the #11 of Bozell from July 28). This would be the first championship for Failing and Bozell and the second for LoBretto who won the 1975 Street Stock Championship. Bozell, 15, has 6 wins on her two-year racing resume, including winning her first race on opening night last year. Nick Failing has been racing in the division for 2 years and has one feature win to his credit. Both Failing and LoBretto have proven to be consistent racers week in and week out.

In the Pro Stocks, Zack Cook, 26, extended his lead over Greg Brown to 31 on July 28; Brown has been losing ground since July 14 when he was down 4 points. Brown finished second (-14) to Matt Corliss last year in the division. (Pictured the #43 of Cook and the #07 of Brown from July 28). This would be the first Kalamazoo Speedway Season Championship for both of these fine men with underfunded teams. Cook has been racing since 2009 and is Nick Layman's cousin, Dick Sexton was his grandfather and Rick Sexton (Limited Late Model Champion 1995-96, Kalamazoo Klash winner 2010) is his uncle. Brown, 26, started racing early and won a kart championship in 2000 and a 2007 enduro race.

Mark Shook leads Tom Thomas by 126 points in the Outlaw Super Late Models. Buddy Head has a 137 point lead over Cory Pressler in the Super Stocks. There is a 3-way battle for the third, fourth and fifth positions with only 6 points separating Keegan Dykstra (-184), AJ Foote (-186) and Kenny Head (-190). In the Outlaw Cyber Stocks, Larry Richardson leads Jeremy Young (-86) and Nick Layman (-119).



Come on out and give the drivers your support during the autograph sessions and cheer on your favorites during the races!

**Admission for August 18: Adults \$12; 13-15 \$8; 6-12 \$2; 5 and under FREE**

## **KALAMAZOO KLASH XXV**

### **Race Day Practices – Top Three in Each Division**

**ARCA/CRA Super Series:** Travis Braden (12.912), Kyle Busch (12.933) and Carson Hoyer (12.986) had the fastest times for the practice sessions held prior to qualifying.

**Outlaw Super Late Models:** Tyler Roahrig (12.343), Brian Bergakker (12.348) and Tom Thomas (12.391) had the faster times for their practice sessions.

### **Qualifying – Top Three in Each Division**

**ARCA/CRA Super Series:** Travis Braden #26 (12.880), Carson Hoyer #14 (12.886) and Brian Campbell #47 (12.898) were the fastest qualifiers. More than one person did a double take at the #26 which at first glance reminds us of Kenny Head's Super Stock. Braden is shown on the cover page with his trophy for fast time.



**Outlaw Super Late Models:** Kyle Busch #51 (12.220), Brian Bergakker #56 (12.233) and Mark Shook #14 (12.302) were the fastest qualifiers in this division. Busch rolled a 6 on the Speedway's big pink dice setting the inversion for the Klash at 14. The top three qualifiers' cars are pictured below as well as a photo of the driver (taken during introductions) with track owner/promoter, Gary Howe. Travis Braden (ARCA/CRA Super Series and Kyle Busch are pictured on the front page of the newsletter with their fast qualifier trophies in their respective divisions).

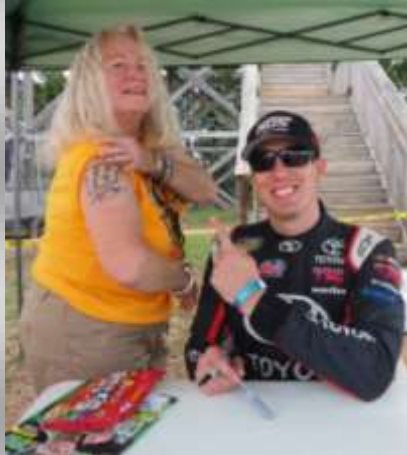


### Exclusive Trackside Experience with Kyle Busch

During the designated autograph session on the track for fans and drivers, a full house was on the party deck for dinner, an exclusive T-shirt and meeting Kyle Busch for an autograph and a photo or two. Track photographer (Racing Woody bottom right) took photos which are posted and available for purchase at [www.racingwoodys.smugmug.com/KalamazooSpeedway](http://www.racingwoodys.smugmug.com/KalamazooSpeedway). The Speedway's videographer (top right) and "poster guy", Kevin, took photos of each individual or family with their own camera or cell phone. Kyle started out the session by welcoming the group and thanking them for coming (photo on the following page). Whether Busch is your driver or not, he earned everyone's respect for being gracious and welcoming each fan, taking the time to interact plus signing a rich array of helmets, T-shirts, and memorabilia. Shy kids? No problem! With a word, Busch was able to get the shyest of kids to come out from behind dad's legs. It was a great time for everyone involved.



## Photos from the Exclusive Trackside Experience



Thank you West Michigan Toyota Dealers for presenting this year's Kalamazoo Klash and providing the Klash pace car. Pictured (left) getting his shirt autographed is Ryan Neilson, Toyota District Manager



Just another day on the party deck at Kalamazoo Speedway. Sitting down to a dinner buffet, waiting for the 25<sup>th</sup> running of the Kalamazoo Klash, shooting the breeze with Kyle Busch.....

## Past Kalamazoo Klash Champions — 1993 to 2016

The 25<sup>th</sup> running of the Kalamazoo Klash brought 13 of the 15 past Klash champions back to the Kalamazoo Speedway.



**Back row:** Brian Cloud (1995), Andy Bozell (1993-94, 1997, 2007), Mike Vansparrentak (1998), Todd Currier (2000), Bob Holley (1996), Fred Campbell (2004), Ken Scheffler (2001), Chris Orr (1999, 2002)

**Front row:** Jeff Ganus (2015), Tom Thomas (2003), Steve Needles (2009), Phil Bozell (2011), Terry Senneker (2008, 2012-14, 2016), Rick Sexton (2010)

**Not pictured** Lee Anderson, deceased (2005), Johnny Benson (2006)

## Race Results



Having the fastest time in race day practice sessions as well as fast time doesn't necessarily mean that a driver will win the race, but this year it did and Travis Braden took home the prize. Twenty-three cars started the ARCA/CRA Super Series 125 lap feature. Rookie Kyle Crump took the early lead from fellow front-row starter, Johnny VanDoorn before VanDoorn took and held the lead for some time, lapping a car before the first 25 laps were complete. Although he and Braden traded the lead, VanDoorn was in the lead for much of the race. VanDoorn appeared to be set to take the victory that eluded him in 2014 when Kyle Busch inched him at the finish. With the third and final caution coming out with 4 to go, VanDoorn selected the inside lane with Braden on the outside. VanDoorn didn't appear to get a good restart when the race went green and Braden shot out to the lead and held it to the finish. VanDoorn settled for second followed by Crump, Jordan Dahlke, and Carson Hoyer. Defending champion, Brian Campbell, finished sixth.

Braden, 23, earned his degree in December 2016 from West Virginia University in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. He notes on his LinkedIn profile that he loves racing and has a passion for applying his engineering insight behind the wheel, which gives him an edge over his competitors on and off the track. He aspires to become a professional driver in NASCAR while building an image for what a championship driver is, removing the image in the minds of those who believe racing is "a silly sport with a bunch of hillbillies driving in circles."



Flagman, Scott Menlin, always puts some extra animation into his efforts; Braden celebrating his victory (we love to see enthusiasm!) and in Victory Lane with Gary Howe.



Due to a fatal engine issue, the defending 5-time Klash champion, Terry Senneker was on the sidelines. While not racing, his Senneker Performance provided #51 was piloted by Kyle Busch. Nine cars ran in the Last Chance 25-lap Race for one spot in the Klash line-up. Dennis Strickland took the win and made the most of it by finishing 7<sup>th</sup>.

With Strickland, 23 cars started Kalamazoo Klash XXV. Jeff Ganus (the 2015 Klash champion) and Steve Needles (2009) headed up the field when the race went green. Needles took the early lead before Ganus passed him. The race was plagued by 7 cautions including a pileup in Turn 1 following the 3<sup>rd</sup> restart trying to complete the 15<sup>th</sup> lap. Numerous cars perished with 110 laps remaining: Rick Senneker, Steve Needles (2009), Doug True, Mike Brooks, Todd Harrington, Adam Terry (who later rejoined the race) and Harold Fair Jr. Ganus led much of the rest of the race as other heavy hitters were advancing through the field behind him. Last year we commented that liquids danced in water and soda bottles as the powerful cars rumbled by; this year standing in the tower was much like an amusement park ride as it shook. There is nothing like this race. At the halfway point, it was Ganus, Brian Ross, Busch, Andy Bozell, Brandon Lyons and Tyler Roahrig. Busch moved up to the #2 spot with 44 laps remaining; Roahrig was in 4<sup>th</sup> with Mark Shook advancing and in 7<sup>th</sup>. With 40 to go, something let loose on Shook's #14 and he went hard into the outside retaining wall. On the restart Roahrig made a bold move making contact with Busch before completing the pass to secure second place (below). Roahrig went to the lead with 33 laps remaining and Busch set his sights on catching him. It appeared that Busch was going to get around Roahrig to take the lead but Roahrig managed to hold him off. At the finish line, Roahrig won with less than a second to spare over second-place finisher Busch. They were followed by Ganus, Andy Bozell (1993-94, 1997, 2007) and Brian Bergakker. Roahrig finished second in the Klash in 2012, 2013 and 2016 and yelled "I can't believe I just won the Klash" during his post-race interview. "This is the biggest win of my career by far," said Roahrig. "I've won some big races before, but this tops it and to beat Kyle Busch of all people. He's no slouch on the race track."



Tom DeVette photo





Kalamazoo Klash XXV



## IN THE MAKE READY CHUTE

**Friday, August 25** is Season Championship Night featuring the five Kalamazoo Speedway weekly divisions with the finale to the regular season being a 100 lap feature for the Outlaw Super Late Models. Don't miss it; it'll be MONTHS until Opening Night 2018!

**Saturday, September 2** is the Call of the Wild. (Rain date September 3). Plenty of feature racing for all classes of cars; which feature a driver races in is totally dependent on speed, not what kind of car it is. Likely it's the 30 minutes comprising the Raceceiver Challenge when the 5 fastest cars in qualifying take to the track one at a time and attempt to break the world speed record. Andy Bozell put up a "defy me" world record speed of 9.465 in 2016 (pictured). That's 142.631 miles per hour and 209.19 feet per second. It's the Speedway's Run What Ya Brung night with the rule book taking the night off.



## KALAMAZOO SPEEDWAY IN THE NEWS

Check out the article called "Run Whatcha Brung" in Late Model Racer's August 2017 magazine. Kalamazoo Speedway made it into a national magazine again! While the article by Crain Munro with photos by Robert Gill and R & S Racing Photos doesn't really talk about Kalamazoo Speedway except in photo captions, all of the photos are from Kalamazoo Speedway's Call of the Wild. How about that?



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Photo credits to RW Motorsports Marketing, Roahrig's second quote from Stan Kalwasinski (speedsport.com)