

# KALAMAZOO SPEEDWAY

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## TRACK TALK

JULY 24, 2023

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### JULY 28 🏁 WEEKLY RACING

The four weekly classes race plus we welcome the Michigan Auto Racing Fan Club.

The Techworks Trailer Sales Street Stock race for \$1,000 to win (sponsored by Performance Plus Auto & Fabrication), the O'Reilly Auto Parts Outlaw FWD race for \$500 sponsored by Honor Credit Union and the Spartan Insulation Zoo Stock for \$400 (sponsored by Howe Patio & Windows). The Hutcherson Construction Late Models race for their regular weekly purse.

#### FRIDAY, JULY 28

Pits Open	3:30 PM
Adult Pit Pass (13+)	\$35
Youth Pit Pass	\$15
Ticket Windows Open	3:30 PM
Adult Grandstand	\$15
Youth Grandstand (6-12)	FREE
Kids 5 & under	FREE
Program Starts	7:30 PM

We will see YOU at the races!



## AUGUST 5 🏁 SEMI-TRUCKS RETURN TO RACE AT THE ZOO

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5	
Pits Open	Noon
Adult Pit Pass (13+)	\$35
Youth Pit Pass	\$15
Ticket Windows Open	Noon
Adult Grandstand	\$25
Youth Grandstand (6-12)	\$10
Kids 5 & under	FREE
Program Starts	7:00 PM
We will see YOU on August 5!	

The Kalamazoo Bandit Big Rigs will be shaking the house on August 5 in their inaugural race appearance. Travis Pastrana and his crew took four of the trucks out for a spin at the Red, White & Boom Night of Destruction and on August 5 we'll be putting a field of trucks on the track to race. And that's not all, the Street Stock, Outlaw FWD, Zoo Stock and Crown Vics share the card.

Be the first to see this new series in action.



## JULY 21 🏁 RACE RECAP

The four weekly classes boasted 105 cars on Friday night which included the Annual Dare to be Different Autism Awareness Race for the Outlaw FWDs.

First-up, the **Spartan Insulation Zoo Stock**. Matthew Elsey Jr., drove to a fast time of 16.759 seconds (80.554 MPH). Gerald Schwartz (bottom left), Michael Metheny (bottom right), Eric Mepyans and Scott Elsey won the heat races. Gerald Schwartz won the 12-lap 'C' feature and Eric Mepyans won the 20-lap 'B' feature. For the 25-lap 'A' feature, Aaron Anderson, racing at the track for the first time this year, led the race for a few laps before the #44 of Desmond Watkins shot into the lead. Watkins jumped the start following a caution very early in the race and was penalized two laps. Because there was no caution for the rest of the race, the penalty was applied to the finish and Watkins was awarded third place not first. Scott Elsey was awarded the win and Matt Elsey the runner-up position. In 4<sup>th</sup> place it was Matthew Elsey Jr., followed by Aaron Anderson, Mason Metzger, Logan Meade, CJ French, Jimmy Hammann and Rusty Noyes in the top 10 (all on the lead lap). Matthew Elsey Jr., is the point leader by 47 points over Scott Elsey; CJ French is down 60 with Mason May down by 74.



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Clockwise (Zoo Stock winners): Eric Mepyans (Heat); Scott Elsey (Heat), Eric Mepyans ('B' Feature), Gerald Schwartz ('C' Feature) and Scott Elsey ('A' Feature)



Moving on to the **O'Reilly Auto Parts Outlaw FWDs**, the weather finally cooperated to run the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dare to be Different Autism Awareness race, presented by Finish Line Fabricating. Thank you to the supporting sponsors as well. Let's give a shout out to Kenny Wright for increasing Autism awareness and securing the sponsors to offer the \$1000 to win and \$300 to start purse for the 'A' feature. Kenny drove his race car around the track with the American flag during the National Anthem sung by the incredible Leslie Stuller and presented the trophies to the winners of the Outlaw FWD races. He also surprised a longtime staff member with a performance award. Wright is already thinking about the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Awareness race (first race in April 2024)! Paul Bittle was the fastest driver in the practice session (14.990); Matthew Elsey Jr. captured quick time in qualifying with a time of 15 seconds flat (90 MPH). Willie Neal won the 20-lap Last Chance race. Also advancing to the main event were Bryan Gates, Camille Lewis and Andrew Locey. In the 44-lap 'A' feature, Bryson Hosner took the lead. An early (literally) pile up damaged Paul Bittle's car and eliminated Ben Wilcox from the race. With 40 laps remaining, Ryan Hamm had the lead until 31 laps remained when Matthew Elsey Jr. moved to the lead followed by Paul Bittle. Following a caution with 8 remaining, Paul Bittle drove into the lead. Will Slaughter made a run driving Tom Smith's #22. Elsey Jr., reclaimed the lead and held it through the finish line. Paul Bittle was the runner-up, followed by Will Slaughter, Ryan Hamm, Curtis Edney Jr. (in Pete Doxey's old #28), Brent Drobny, Willie Neal (having raced his way into the 'A' feature), Kenny Wright (having been sent to the tail for missing the madhouse commitment symbol), Bryson Hosner and Bryan Gates. Matthew Elsey, Jr. holds a commanding point lead over his closest competitor, Jake Doxey (-279).



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Below left, Kenny Wright (standing) with Last Chance winner Willie Neal and right with 'A' feature winner Matthew Elsey Jr.



Bring on the **Techworks Trailer Sales Street Stock!** They didn't disappoint with their nose to tail and door to door racing. Kyle Ribble was the fastest in the practice session with a time of 14.979. Kyle VanSparrentak took fast-time in qualifying with a time of 14.848, 90.921 MPH (seen below right tossing the inversion dice). Heath Bronkema took the initial lead in the 35-lap feature followed by Shane Miller who drove to the lead for about 10 laps before Bronkema resumed the lead. Alex Sexton had moved up in the field and the two Kyles (Ribble and VanSparrentak) were both moving determinedly through the field. Alex Sexton took a quick turn as leader before Kyle Ribble moved to the prime spot with 16 laps remaining. Andy Rutherford was making a run along with Ricky LaDuke; VanSparrentak was right there as well. At the finish it was Kyle Ribble (below right), Andy Rutherford, Kyle VanSparrentak, Ricky LaDuke and Alex Sexton in the top five. Starting off the second half of the order was Dave Leonard, Jr., followed by Shane Miller, Zach Westdorp (in Robert Kirkendall's car), Heath Bronkema and Danny Oxford. Kyle VanSparrentak holds the point lead over defending champion Ricky LaDuke (-64) and Kyle Ribble (-86).



In the \$1,200 to win **Hutcherson Construction Late Models** (purse also sponsored by Hutcherson Construction), Billy Shannon posted the fastest time in practice (14.059) and followed that up with the fastest time in qualifying (14.041, 96.147 MPH). In the 35-lap feature, Taylor Sexton took the early lead and held it through the half-way point while the field lined up to change that. Kenny Head did just that with 15 remaining, with Luke Krick moving into the runner-up position with 14 remaining. Billy Shannon and Jeff Bozell made their moves with under 10 to go. Shannon passed Krick and took aim at Head with 9 remaining. Kenny Head's car had what it took to finish the job and it was Kenny Head at the line followed by Billy Shannon (0.873 back), Luke Krick, Jeff Bozell and Taylor Sexton finishing in the top five. TC Burgess was in sixth place followed by Jared Blanchard, Jordan Brinkert, Rick Senneker and Bill Tomlinson, all on the lead lap. The point race is very tight with Lucas Krick holding a slim 6 point lead over defending champion Billy Shannon with Jeff Bozell (-12) and Kenny Head (-25) not far behind.

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Winner multi-time track champion, Kenny Head, with sponsor Nick Hutcherson of Hutcherson Construction.



## NOTE FROM KALAMAZOO SPEEDWAY MANAGEMENT

We had a longer night than usual due to an unusually high number of cautions. Prolonged interruptions in the race program taxes us all: management, staff, drivers and fans. However, adversity or a favorite driver not achieving the desired outcome is no excuse for unruly behavior, vulgar or offensive language or gestures on anyone's part. We all know better and a few two-week "vacations" will be handed out for the unsportsmanlike conduct seen on Friday night. There is no place in the sport for this sort of behavior and it will not be tolerated.



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photos by A. Fisher

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