



# KALAMAZOO Speedway TRACK TALK December 13, 2017



*Peace, Joy and Hope  
from our family to yours*

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## CHANGE COMES TO THE ZOO IN 2018

## #fastfridays

You'll notice more "off nights" for each class on the 2018 racing schedule with more emphasis on the weekly classes rather than traveling series. Each class will have a night (or two) to be the star of the show with a higher purse to match the notoriety.

Not only is the track's entry level class changing its name from Flip Flop Cyber Stocks to Zoo Stocks but the directional "flip flop" is out as well. The Zoo Stocks will race the "right way" like everyone else. Expect closer tech inspections to keep everyone rule compliant and on a level playing field. If your team wants to tinker with set-up then the Outlaw FWD division is for you (formerly the Outlaw Cyber Stocks).

**DAYS UNTIL THE FIRST OPEN PRACTICE: 121**

**DAYS UNTIL THE SEASON OPENER: 134**



## A FEW LAST LOOKS AT 2017

If we had space we'd honor every driver who raced at the Zoo this past season. Every driver contributed to the overall success of the 2017 season and we're grateful to each of you for choosing to race with us. A few drivers/events stood out for one reason or another and we thought we'd give them a shout out. Ironically three of the drivers cited were in serious accidents and battled their way back to the top. In no particular order.....

### KYLE BUSCH

Star power isn't necessary to make the Kalamazoo Klash a huge success, but the Klash attendance record was broken in 2014 when Kyle Busch first visited the track and it wasn't too shabby when he came back in 2017. Busch earned his first Monster Energy Cup Championship in 2015 after starting off the season breaking his right leg and left ankle in an Xfinity race in Daytona. By the time Busch could return to racing, he'd missed 11 points events, leaving only 15 races to meet the terms of the waiver NASCAR granted him to be eligible for the Playoffs. Busch went on to own the 2015 season, putting together a streak of four wins in five weeks and then winning the four driver winner-take-all season finale at Miami-Homestead. Busch is a fierce competitor and we're sure he felt one got away in the Klash this year when he finished second to Tyler Roahrig—we wouldn't be surprised if he makes another run at getting his name on the Klash trophy at some time in the future.



### BUDDY HEAD



Buddy Head earned the Hard Charger Award for 2017 as well as the season championship for the Super Stocks. Head placed in the top 5 for every one of the 11 Super Stock races (only Zack Cook in the Pro Stocks can say the same) and won 5 features (only Mark Shook in the Outlaw Super Late Models matched that feat). This is Head's 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive championship in the Super Stocks class and 6<sup>th</sup> overall. For the 1<sup>st</sup> time in 3 years, Head AND his car were able to collect the season championship trophy.

## HONORABLE MENTION: JOSH NYBERG AND PAUL BITTLE

Honorary mention in the hard charging category goes out to Josh Nyberg in the Flip Flop Cyber Stock class. Nyberg could only run 4 times due to his work schedule but made the most of it every time he was on the track putting up 1 fast time, 2 feature wins, 4 top 10s and 3 top 5s. He came within .009 seconds of breaking Valerie Bozell's track record.

Paul Bittle tried out the Outlaw Cyber Stocks weekly racing scene following his 2016 Super Shoe "A" Feature win in the FWD Nationals and left his mark whenever he raced. Bittle ran in 6 races putting up 5 fast times, winning 4 features and posting 5 top 5s. He broke the track record in a feature race and broke it again two weeks later (in the more conventional way) during qualifying.

## TYLER ROHRIG

Tyler Roahrig missed the 2014 season following a serious crash, suffering extensive injuries and rehabilitation. He started out the 2017 season at the Zoo by defending his 2016 Intimidator 100 victory. In August he won Kalamazoo Klash XXV calling it the biggest win of his career thus far. He'd previously claimed fast time twice and finished three times in the runner-up spot to Terry Senneker. Jeff Ganus led at the halfway point of the Klash, Kyle Busch was in third with Roahrig in sixth. 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. Roahrig went to the lead with 33 laps remaining. 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 runner-up Busch.



## JEFF GANUS

Jeff Ganus is no stranger to recovery either. In August 2015, Ganus earned a coveted spot on the Kalamazoo Klash trophy. He finished second to Tyler Roahrig at the 2016 Intimidator 100. May brought a horrific motorcycle accident that put him in the hospital. He was able to start in the 2016 Kalamazoo Klash but retired early. This year Ganus has added another race to his envious resume by winning the second running of the Gary Terry "Follow Your Dreams" 125. Ganus and Tyler Roahrig (fast qualifier) played cat and mouse through much of the rain-delayed race. Roahrig made a play in the final lap and finished mere feet out of victory lane. Ganus went on to put his stamp on the 2017 Kalamazoo Speedway season by taking home the Super Shoe Nationals trophy.



## FANS, DRIVERS, TEAMS and STAFF at the GARY TERRY "FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS" 125



There has been rain before at the track and it's sure fallen at inopportune times, but it's safe to say we've never had the sort of sustained torrential rain that fell during the Gary Terry 125. Deep water flowed in the infield and the parking lot. If you weren't in a space that had walls and a roof you were soaked to the skin. There were no easy solutions in terms of finishing the race. Too many drivers weren't able to return on the next day to finish the race so the track was dried and the race resumed.

Before the rains the Pro/Street Stocks put on an intense 50 lap race. After a caution with

three laps to go, the field was compacted and at the start of the final lap Buddy Head (driving Greg Haynes' 81) was in front followed by Matt Corliss, Keith Wilfong, Tyler Hufford and Greg Brown. Head and Corliss are two tough competitors and weren't going to give an inch coming out of the 4<sup>th</sup> turn heading to the finish line. They made contact which continued down the front stretch and over the finish line with Corliss crossing first, followed by Head and Wilfong.



### LOGAN MEADE



Logan Meade won the mini-enduro at the Night of Destruction. Meade enthusiastically celebrated his victory with a great burnout against the front stretch wall. This was followed by a flameout as the car's engine ignited and prompted a visit by the safety truck.

### KEVIN SWEAT

The Sweat brothers (Brandon, Denver and Kevin) added additional punch to the Flip Flop Cyber Stocks in 2017. The 3 brothers all finished in the top 10 and if the track conveyed an award for most acrobatic, Kevin Sweat would be a frontrunner. Racing to keep his 4<sup>th</sup> position in the points, Sweat had an unfortunate meet and greet (photos on next page) with the safety tire and finished the season in 6<sup>th</sup> place. Thankfully Sweat was fine.



## ZOO KARES FOR KIDS



Santa's helpers have been hard at work shopping and wrapping to bring a little extra joy to 47 kids representing 11 families at Christmas. It might be a toss-up on who gets the most out of this tradition.

