



Kalamazoo, Michigan. Fans who stayed home on July 22 thinking racing couldn't have gotten any better than the Kalamazoo Klash on July 16 missed some intense racing.

The Spartan Insulation Zoo Stock came out 32 cars strong with Ryan Diamond at the top of the leaderboard in qualifying (16.787). Christina Rantz, David Smith, Keegan Letts and Noah Thomson (first win) won the heat races. Andy Louwaert (also a first win) won the 'B' feature. Ryan Diamond took the win in the 'A' 20-lap feature, followed by Cody Warren, Charles Anderson Jr., Logan Meade and Rielly Meade finishing in the top five. Diamond tops the point standings over Logan Meade (-96).

Will Slaughter qualified at 15.163 for the O'Reilly Auto Part Outlaw FWD. Matthew Elsey Jr. and Gordon Hopson (another first time winner) won the heat races. The 25-lap feature turned into a dual between Slaughter and Elsey Jr. with 20 laps to go. Racing side by side for the rest of the race, it was too close to call without the scoring tower providing an assist from most vantage points. Slaughter and Elsey Jr., traded the lead several times in this intense and well-fought race, with Will Slaughter prevailing. Elsey Jr. was the runner up followed by Dan Rigoni, Nick Layman and John Munro rounding out the top five. Slaughter retains the point lead over Elsey Jr. (-23).

The Techworks Street Stock also put on a show of powerful racing. Keith Wilfong took top qualifying honors with a 14.919. Matt Weenink and DJ Oxford won the heat races. The door to door, side to side racing started with the first lap in the 30-lap feature. Dyllan Uminn took the early lead; Bobby Oxford then led for a few laps before Jeremy Young took over and started pulling away. A caution with 11 laps remaining set up a dual between Young and Ricky LaDuke (multi-time winner this season). In a repeat of the Outlaw FWD race, it was too close to call unless you were watching the camera or parked at the line. LaDuke won the lap more times than not including the white flag lap, but Young pulled it out for the win, his first of the season. LaDuke was the runner-up, followed by DJ Oxford, Matt Weenink and Kyle Ribble. Ricky LaDuke is 15 points ahead of Jeremy Young in the point standings.

This was third qualifying race for the Hutcherson Grand Slam. Billy Shannon collected fast-time (13.630). Lucas Krick and Denver Sweat won the heat races. Early in the 35-lap feature Jeff Ganus took the lead and appeared to be headed for victory lane. And then in the blink of an eye, Ganus had retired, and Buddy Head was the new leader. Billy Shannon set about catching him but in the end, it was Buddy Head for his first win in the Templates since 2019 when he won the season championship. Billy Shannon was the runner up followed by Lucas Krick, Dylan Stovall and Kenny Head at the top of the order. A.J. Foote, Cam Schoeck and Nathan Koester qualified for the Grand Slam Finale. Billy Shannon has the point lead by 43 over Kenny Head.

On Friday, July 29, Kalamazoo Speedway runs the same program with the front wheel drive cars in the spotlight with the Zoo Stock and Outlaw FWD racing for \$1,000 to win; the Zoo B feature sponsored by IAC-Mendon will pay \$200 to win. Plus it's Michigan Auto Racing Fan Club night. For more expanded coverage and photos of the July 22 races and upcoming races catch the Kalamazoo Speedway e-newsletter, Track Talk.