

HUFFMAN SURVIVES “CRAFTSMAN NIGHT AT THE RACES”.

By Garland Coley

Richard Petty once said, “To win a race, you had to put yourself in the best position to win.” This analogy was again proven true as Ashley Huffman piloted his #7 Chevrolet to victory in the BOJANGLES LATE MODEL STOCKS feature Saturday, June 9 th , at Hickory Motor Speedway. Huffman was 3 rd as the field took the white flag seeking the trophy on CRAFTSMAN NIGHT AT THE RACES. This was also was the same position he started the race. But multiple contacts between race leader #29 Andy Loden and 2 nd place #07 Chrissy Wallace sent Loden spinning and both cars to the rear. This put Huffman in the lead and he seized the day winning the green-white-checkers finish to claim his first feature win of the season. The race was a story of the three drivers mentioned and the consequences of the events witnessed.



For Loden, who led the first 49 laps of the 50 that were scheduled, the contact between him and Wallace caused a major points nightmare. Loden leads the points standing at the track, as well as North Carolina State Points. He is also second in NASCAR Whelen All-American Series national points. The contact and spin cost him valuable points in the extremely tight State and National points battles. If Loden loses either one, this night could have been the deciding factor. Only time will reveal that story.

Wallace, who had gained national notoriety the previous week by winning the feature here at “America's Most Famous Short Track”, saw a determined effort of clawing her from 7 th starting spot to the battle for the win, dashed as the contact between her and Loden in turn two that escalated in turn three, drew the attention of track officials and, earned her a trip to the rear of the field. While that was disappointing for the 19 year old hotshoe, backing up her first win with a strong run to the front of the field should provide her and her growing legions of fans with solace.

Meanwhile Huffman, who got a late start to the 2007 campaign, enjoyed the spoils of the hard work he and his crew have endured with a trip to Victory Lane.

“These guys {his race team} have worked so hard,” Huffman stated in Victory Lane, “I can't tell you how hard they've worked. They give me 150 percent every night of the week. They come to the track and work so hard.” These comments were made from a raucous Victory Lane of crewmen and driver enjoying the rewards of their effort.

Huffman survived six cautions and one red flag to claim the win. 2 nd was #31 Kyle Grissom, 3 rd went to #53 Patrick Molesworth, 4 th across the line was #47 Duncan Molesworth, and #38 Chase Maurer rounded out the top five. Following post-race inspection, the #47 car was disqualified for unapproved fuel, moving Maurer to fourth, and #44 Ben Ebeling to fifth place.



The finish allowed Grissom to gain 22 points on Loden in the Track Championship chase, with #19 Kyle Moon maintaining third place in the points.

In ADVANCE AUTO PARTS SUPER TRUCK action Keith Bumgarner drove his #97 truck to victory in their 35-lap feature. 2 nd place went to #69 Trevor Hignutt, however it was 3 rd place finishing #6 Dexter Canipe Jr. that had the fans' attention for a majority of the race. Going into the night's event, Bumgarner and Canipe were tied for the Advance Auto Parts Super Trucks points lead. Canipe wrecked his truck in turn one during practice and had to borrow Waylon Flynn's truck for the race. Canipe proceeded to set fast time in qualifying, then after a spirited 11-lap battle with Bumgarner, which resulted in contact

and Canipe falling back to 5 th , rebounded to battle for 2 nd with Hignutt. That battle also produced contact and brought the crowd to their feet.

The win gave Bumgarner a four-point lead over Canipe, with #01 J. R. Allen and Hignutt both making big gains with their respective finishes to tie for third in points.

#44 Jarit Johnson survived the contact of a wild 3-wide pass, also involving #55 Waylon Flynn and #4 Chris Chapman with 5 laps to go in the Limited Late Model 35-lapper to claim his third win in a row, in one of the most exciting Limited Late Model races at the track all season. Flynn survived the contact to finish second and Chapman crossed the line in 3 rd .

Limited Late Models points chase is tightening up as the division nears mid-season, with #99 Andrew Carlsen maintaining the lead with 366 points, Johnson closing in with 364, and Flynn in third with 344.



Pro 4-action saw #21 Todd Harrington grab the lead on lap 20 of 25 and secure his first feature win of the 2007 season. #09 Randy Canipe enjoyed his best finish of the year as runner up, while pole sitter #57 Grant Wimbish finished 3 rd .

Wimbish maintained his Pro-4's points lead, but Canipe and Harrington are both only 4 points back, tied for second place.

Hobby Stock action saw “The Racing Realtor” Nikki Long pilot her #5 machine to victory leading all 20 laps from the pole. #07 Denver Jones was a close 2 nd and #90 Ronnie Simms was 3 rd . However, final official results are still pending in the Hobby Stocks from post-tech issues with all of the top three finishers that require further investigation.



All of us here at Hickory Motor Speedway would like to thank all our fans that helped make CRAFTSMAN NIGHT AT THE RACES a success, and we invite you back this Saturday night, June 16 th, for BLUE RIDGE HARLEY DAVIDSON BUELL NIGHT AT THE RACES. There will also be a special Fathers' Day salute and admission price. Details are forthcoming on the website or by calling (828) 464-3655.

So join us next week, here at the place where racing memories are made: “The Birthplace of the NASCAR Stars” Hickory Motor Speedway.



[Close Window](#)