

Mercer visits a Familiar Place.....Victory Lane

By: Jill Frischmann, Hickory Motor Speedway

July 12, 2008



(Newton, NC) After a weekend off from racing, drivers and fans were ready for action on the track and that is just what they got during "Carolina West Wireless Night at the Races". The evening featured appearances by the Bojangles Late Models, the Jewelry Exchange Limited Late Models, the Advance Auto Parts Super Trucks, the Hickory Street Stocks and the Red Baron Race Parts Hobby Stocks. Fans were also able to spend time before the racing action began meeting their favorite Hickory Street Stock drivers during an On Track Autograph Session at the World's Most Famous Short Track, Hickory Motor Speedway.

Fans knew the Bojangles Late Models' 50 lap feature was going to be an action packed event before the first lap was completed. As the field made its way around the track, the #8 of Jamie Yelton took the #70 of Brit Andersen and the #42 of Todd Goble three wide heading into turn three, sending Andersen spinning and Goble hard into the outside wall, causing the first caution of the feature to wave. The #89 of David Latour Jr. was a helpless victim as he got caught up in the action, finding himself spun out and in the outside wall along with Goble.

The #29 of defending HMS Champ Andy Loden used the restart to his advantage as he worked to capture the lead from the #10 of WynnCom Pole Sitter Andy Mercer. Loden used an uncommon strategy by running the low line to capture the first place position. Mercer wasn't going to settle for second place and was back in the lead by lap 16, "He caught me completely off guard," Mercer remarked about Loden's move for the lead. Mercer wasn't the only car on the move as Yelton worked his way into the top-five by lap 19.



A second caution was called on lap 31 due to debris on the track. It was back to green flag racing, and Yelton continued to make his way to the front. Yelton had worked his way into the fourth place position by lap 38. He made his move to capture third from the #7 of Ashley Huffman on lap 41 when he squeezed between Huffman and the lap car of Latour Jr. With five laps to go, the #57 of Grant Wimbish made his move on #01 of Roger Powell for the first place position. Powell battled back until the end to move back into fifth, but Wimbish proved to be too much for Powell, leaving him to settle for sixth.

The Jewelry Exchange Limited Late Models demonstrated why Hickory Motor Speedway is the World's Most Famous Short Track during their 35 lap feature. When the green flag dropped, the #94 of WynnCom Pole Sitter Josh Wright and the #3 of Dexter Canipe Jr. pulled away from the field, showing their dominance. By lap 10, Canipe Jr. began putting the heat on Wright to try and capture the lead. On lap 19, Wright and Canipe Jr. made contact heading into turn one sending Wright spinning and both cars to the back of the pack for the restart.

The second caution of the event was brought out on lap 22 when the #39 of Lee Queen spun coming out of turn two. The caution was just what Wright and Canipe Jr. needed as they continued to work their way back to the front of the pack. A third caution flew on lap 27 when the #17 of Kyle Mansch and the #25 of Nick Proffitt got together in turn two, sending both spinning. During the caution Track Officials black flagged Wright. Due to Wright failing to come in for a stop-and-go penalty, Track Officials parked Wright for the remainder of the race.





On the restart the #27 of Brandon Mundy got loose allowing the #07 of Tyler Church to make a run on Mundy for the lead. The two had a tight battle going when Mundy got loose coming out of turn three sending him hard into the outside wall on lap 29, bringing out the fourth and final caution. The caution put Canipe Jr. in perfect position to battle Church for the lead. With three laps to go, Canipe Jr. made his move on Church, but a hot slick track caused Canipe Jr. to loose momentum and allowing Church to hold onto the top spot. It didn't take long for Canipe Jr. to battle back again, but Church held strong until the last lap. The two were side by side banging into one another coming off of turn four on the final lap but Church managed to pull off the win by mere inches. "I guess our luck's finally turned around," an emotional Church

stated during a post race interview. The #28 of Jason Crouse, the #05 of Jordan McGregor, and Proffitt rounded out the top five respectively.



The racing action was tight during the Advance Auto Parts Super Trucks 35 lap feature. The #97 of Keith Bumgarner jumped to the point when the green flag waved, taking the position from #69 of WynnCom Pole Sitter Trevor Hignutt. During the first 10 laps, the #59 of Rock Harris battled with Hignutt for the second place position, but Harris had no success taking the spot from Hignutt. On lap 15, the #54 of Jennifer Crossman went for a spin on the back stretch bringing out the first caution of the event.

On lap 20, the #7 of Joseph Boyer became victim of a hot slick race track as he got loose coming off of turn four and spun out on the front stretch bringing out caution number two. Bumgarner jumped back to the lead at the restart with Hignutt trailing behind, leaving Harris and the #6 of Dexter Canipe Jr. to battle for third. Canipe Jr. was able to capture the third place position by lap 21.

With six laps to go, Crossman found herself spinning again, this time coming off of turn three, causing the third and final caution to fly. From the final restart, Harris went back to battle Canipe Jr. to try and take back the third place position, but Canipe Jr. proved to be too much for Harris to overcome, leaving him to settle for a fourth place position. The #94 of

Ben Ebeling rounded out the top five.

Exciting is the best way to describe the Hickory Street Stock caution filled, 30 lap feature. The #03 of Kevin Eby jumped to the point at the start of the race, but before the first lap could be completed the #21 of WynnCom Pole Sitter Chris Townsend found himself fighting a slick race track and spinning out of control as he came out of turn four. From the restart it was clean racing until lap six, when the #1 of Taylor Stricklin and the #39 of Dan Crate got together coming off of turn one, sending both for a spin. The #32 of Jeff Byers was unable to stop as he rounded turn one and smashed into the backend of Crate, bringing out caution number two.

Ten laps into the feature, the battle to watch was for the second place position. On lap 12 the #5 of Mike Newton tried to make a move on the #64 of Marshall Sutton coming off of turn three. Newton gets loose as he rounds the turn and spins out causing the third caution of the feature. On lap 16, Newton makes a run for the front of the pack, but coming out of three he makes contact with Crate with both spinning, causing the fourth caution to wave.

With ten laps to go, Stricklin had broken into the top three, just as the fifth caution flew for debris on the race track. From the restart, Stricklin began to battle Sutton for second but was unable to complete the pass and capture the position. Five laps remained when the #71 of Robert DiVanna and Crate got together sending both cars hard into the outside wall of turn four, making it a total count of six cautions. With only four laps to go, Stricklin got loose coming off of turn three and Newton was right on his tail, and both wreck, bringing out the seventh and final caution of the feature.

On the restart, Sutton made a move on Eby to try and grab the first place position, but Eby was too much for Sutton and he would have to settle for second. "We're here to win," Eby remarked during his post race interview. Crate, Byers, and the #20 of David Webb completed the top-five.





The Red Baron Race Parts Hobby Stocks proved that it doesn't take a lot to have a good time racing at Hickory Motor Speedway. With only four cars taking to the track for the 10 lap feature, drivers still managed to have fun racing one another. Once the green flag waved the #3 of Wayne Harrington jumped ahead of the field taking the #83 of David Hasson with him. Hasson ran high into turn one giving the #90 of Ronnie Sims the opportunity to battle his way back into his second place starting position. Sims gave it all he had but it just wasn't enough to overtake Hasson leaving Simms to settle for third. "I'd go anywhere and race with Hasson, he's great to race with," Sims later said during a post race interview. The #-1 of Ronald Dale McNeil followed in fourth. Following post-race technical inspection, the #3 failed to meet the rules

and was disqualified, giving Hasson the win, Sims second, and McNeil third.

Be sure to join us next Saturday, July 19, for "The Dwight Huffman Memorial presented by Cars Plus". This incredibly special night will feature the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series, with appearances by the Jewelry Exchange Limited Late Models, Hickory Street Stocks, Hickory Pro 4's, the Red Baron Race Parts and a special 77 lap feature for the Bojangles Late Models in memory of Dwight Huffman.

Grandstands open at 5 PM with qualifying immediately following. An On Track Autograph Session featuring the Bojangles Late Models and other special celebrity guests will take place at 6 PM, with feature racing action beginning at 7 PM. Tickets for the event are only \$7 for adults, teens, and seniors, \$5 for kids 7-12 and kids 6 and under are free. The first 77 kids will receive a FREE Dwight Huffman Memorial t-shirt, plus thousands of dollars in prizes for race teams and fans will be given away throughout the night.

For more information please visit www.dwighthuffmanmemorial.com or our website at www.hickorymotorspeedway.com or by phone at 828-464-3655. We can't wait to see you at the races!

Hickory Motor Speedway is a .363 mile asphalt track. The track held its first event in June of 1951 posting Gwyn Staley as the event winner. Hickory Motor Speedway has supported series such as the now Sprint Cup and Nationwide Series. Currently the Speedway is sanctioned by NASCAR featuring the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series. The Speedway also hosts a wide variety of touring series that travel throughout the country.

Hickory Motor Speedway runs Saturday nights, mid-March through October. Grandstands open at 5 PM with racing beginning at 7 PM. For more information visit www.hickorymotorspeedway.com.

Official Results:

Bojangles Late Model 50

1. (10) Andy Mercer
2. (29) Andy Loden
3. (8) Jamie Yelton
4. (7) Ashley Huffman
5. (57) Grant Wimbish
6. (01) Roger Powell
7. (28) Mark Johnson
8. (99) Sean Ballantine
9. (47) Don Paige
10. (89) David Latour Jr.
11. (21) Brian Curry
12. (29x) Tyler Church
13. (70) Brit Andersen
14. (42) Todd Goble

1. (07) Tyler Church
2. (3) Dexter Canipe Jr.
3. (28) Jason Crouse
4. (05) Jordon McGregor
5. (25) Nick Proffitt
6. (77) Mark Goin
7. (45) Kenneth Pardue
8. (17) Kyle Mansch
9. (32) Jeremy Harrell
10. (4) Brad Berg
11. (75) Berry Helms
12. (27) Brandon Mundy
13. (94) Josh Wright
14. (39) Lee Queen
15. (95) Michael Buckner

Advance Auto Parts Super Trucks 35

1. (97) Keith Bumgarner
2. (69) Trevor Hignutt
3. (6) Dexter Canipe Jr.
4. (59) Rock Harris
5. (94) Ben Ebeling
6. (29) Ricky Dennie
7. (7) Joseph Boyer
8. (78) Chris Birdsall
9. (54) Jennifer Crossman

Hickory Street Stocks 30

1. (03) Kevin Eby
2. (64) Marshall Sutton
3. (39) Dan Crate
4. (32) Jeff Byers
5. (20) David Webb
6. (43) Heather Bell
7. (54) J R Kessler
8. (1) Taylor Stricklin
9. (5) Mike Newton
10. (71) Robert DiVanna
11. (21) Chris Townsend

Red Baron Race Parts Hobby Stocks 10

1. (83) David Hasson
2. (90) Ronnie Sims
3. (-1) Ronald Dale McNeil
4. (3) Wayne Harrington - DQ

WynnCom Pole Award

Bojangles Late Models:

(10) Andy Mercer – 15.141 seconds

Jewelry Exchange Limited Late Model:

(94) Josh Wright – 15.603 seconds

Advance Auto Parts Super Trucks:

(69) Trevor Hignutt – 15.815 seconds

Hickory Street Stocks:

(21) Chris Townsend – 17.037 seconds

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