

Loden Cleans up at the Dwight Huffman Memorial

July 20th , 2008

Photos by: Legacy Video & Photography

(Newton, NC) The Inaugural Dwight Huffman Memorial presented by CARS PLUS Lenoir was an amazing night filled with laughter and tears as family, friends, and fans remember the late Dwight Huffman. The night was filled with fast paced racing action as the Bojangles Late Models, the Jewelry Exchange Limited Late Models, the Hickory Street Stocks, the Hickory Pro 4's and the Red Baron Race Parts Hobby Stocks all made an appearance for Round #15 of the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series at the World's Most Famous Short Track, Hickory Motor Speedway.

It was an extremely special evening for the Bojangles Late Models as the strong 19-car field headed onto the track to compete in a 77 lap feature to celebrate the memory of Dwight Huffman. It was no surprise for fans to see the #10 of Andy Mercer in the WynnCom Pole Position, as he has been demonstrating his dominance week after week. When the green flag waved, it didn't take long for Mercer and the #29 of Andy Loden to pull away from the field. The two raced side by side for the first five laps and then Loden made his move on Mercer pulling into the lead.



On lap ten, it was a battle for third as the #59 of Coleman Pressley went up against the #43 of Jesse LeFevers, Pressley dove to the low line capturing the position on lap 17. On lap 20, Mercer went to make a move on Loden trying to regain the top spot. As Loden and Mercer continued their great battle, the #25 of Sam Watts began to make his move on LeFevers for fourth, while Pressley continued to make up ground on Loden and Mercer. The #7 of Ashley Huffman had an unfortunate night, while racing in the memory of his father, Huffman experienced mechanical issues causing him to pull off early in the event.

Lap 35 saw a tight battle for second as Pressley worked his way up to take on Mercer. The two raced side by side, and Pressley found momentum as he drove off the turns, but lap traffic would give Mercer the ability to hold off Pressley. By lap 42, the car to watch was that of the #17, Rob Fuller. Fuller made his way into the battle for fourth, shooting past Watts and LeFevers. On lap 49, Pressley finally made his move on Mercer diving under him capturing the second place position, just as the #03 Randy Hawkins went for a spin heading into turn four bringing out the first caution, forcing Pressley to fall back into the third place position for the restart.



During the restart, the #33 of James Goff found himself in trouble on the back stretch causing major front end damage to his ride and bringing out the second and final caution. After the restart, Fuller began to work on Pressley to capture the third place position, Pressley got loose coming off of four, allowing Fuller to dive under him with Pressley back into the fourth spot. With six laps remaining, the battle for fifth became intense as Watts and the #70 of Brit Andersen went head to head, Andersen tried hard but didn't have enough for Watts, leaving Watts to finish fifth.

Mercer and Loden brought fans to their feet on the last lap, as Mercer made one last valiant attempt on Loden for the lead. As the two came off turn four, they were side by side, but Loden powered ahead of Mercer to grab the checkers. "Wow, what a great night. I really wanted to win this one for the Huffmans...winning this race is such a big deal," Loden explained during his post race interview. It is not only an extreme honor for a driver to win this feature event, but it's an excellent pay day as well

due in part to the many sponsors who donated to the overall purse as "Lap Sponsors". Thanks in part to the gracious "Lap Sponsors" Loden will receive an additional \$10,000 in prize money for laps lead during the feature.

It was another great race as the Jewelry Exchange Limited Late Models made an appearance for a 35 lap feature. It was exciting from the first lap when the #17 of WynnCom Pole Sitter Kyle Mansch and the #3 of Dexter Canipe Jr. made contact coming off of turn four as they battled one another for the lead. Mansch was able to hold onto the lead and pull away from the field creating a three car lead by lap 10. The #15 of Chazz Anderson took fans by surprise as he grabbed the second place position from Canipe Jr. on lap four. "I love the competition here...I love the racin' here," Anderson stated during his post race interview.

The first caution of the event was brought out on lap 23, when the #66 of Travis Byrd went up in smoke on the front stretch and then for a spin as he headed into turn one. The restart was action packed as the #32 of Jeremy Harrell went for a spin heading into turn one, bringing out caution number two. There were only eight laps to go when the #25 of Nick Proffitt, the #28 of Jason Crouse, and the #75 of Eric Evans went three wide on the back stretch and into turn three as they battled for the fourth place position. Evans, running the outside line was forced high up the track as the three headed into turn four, causing him to lose momentum and several track positions. Proffitt and Crouse continued the battle for fourth to the checkers. Proffitt proved the victor leaving Crouse to settle for fifth.

The Hickory Street Stocks gave the fans their money's worth as they competed for 30 laps of nail biting, edge of your seat excitement. The #10 of WynnCom Pole Sitter Kevin Townsend and the #64 of Marshall Sutton spent the first 12 laps battling back

and forth trading out the lead. It wasn't until the two came upon lap traffic that Sutton was able to fully capture the lead. Using the #54 of J. R. Kessler as a pick, Sutton was able to pull ahead of Townsend and the rest of the field. On lap 18, the #25 of Jeremy Pelfrey began to make a move on Townsend to take over second. It wasn't until lap 22, when Pelfrey was finally able to close the door on Townsend grabbing second place, but would later fall back in the field.

It looked to be a promising night for the rookie #1 Taylor Stricklin as he managed to keep himself in the top five and out of trouble for the majority of the race. With five laps to go, the #39 of Dan Crate made his way past Stricklin for fourth and brought along the #03 of Kevin Eby. Crate would soon fall back in pack. On the final lap, Eby put the pressure on the #99 of Jonathon Smith as he looked to take the third place spot. Smith was just too much for Eby as they finished in the third and fourth positions. "I couldn't have asked for a better car...this is awesome!" Smith stated during a post race interview. Pelfrey completed the top five.

The Hickory Pro 4's came out in usual fashion, putting on a great show for all in attendance. As soon as the green flag, waved the #21 of Todd Harrington jumped to the point taking the lead from WynnCom Pole Sitter, #99 Matt Elledge. Harrington began pulling away from the field, leaving those behind him to fight for position. On lap four it was a battle for fourth as the #09 of Randy Canipe looked to grab the stop from the #66 of Scott Wallace. It only took two laps for Canipe to make his move and capture the fourth place position leaving Wallace to settle for fifth.

Ten laps into the feature the #57 of Josh Wimbish began to close in on Elledge, putting Wimbish in prime position to battle for second. The first and only caution of the 25 lap feature flew on lap 12 as the #59 of Donn Wardo went for a spin as he headed into turn two. The restart was just what Wimbish needed to capture second from Elledge on lap 15, leaving Elledge to settle for a third place finish.

The field may have been small but the action was not, as the Red Baron Race Parts Hobby Stocks took to the track for their 15 lap feature. The #90 of Ronnie Sims jumped to the lead at the sight of the green flag, bringing the #83 of David Hasson along for the ride. Hasson spent the first half few laps of the feature going high and then low looking for his chance to take the lead from Sims. With two laps to go, Hasson dove under Sims in turn four to grab the lead. Hasson and Sims fought to the bitter end as the two banged against one another on the final lap as they came out of turn four, both sideways and looking for the win. Hasson proved too much for Sims, leaving Sims to settle for second. The #5 of Mikey Canipe and the #-1 of Ronald Dale McNeil completed the top four.



Be sure to join us next Saturday, July 26, for Advance Auto Parts Night at the Races! The night will feature Round #16 of the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series, with appearances by the Bojangles Late Models, the Jewelry Exchange Limited Late Models, Hickory Street Stocks, Hickory Pro 4's and the Advance Auto Parts Super Trucks. Grandstands open at 5 PM with qualifying immediately following. An On Track Autograph Session featuring the Advance Auto Parts Super Trucks will take place at 6 PM, with feature racing action beginning at 7 PM. Tickets for the event are only \$10 for adults, \$8 for teens and seniors, \$5 for kids 7-12, and kids 6 and under are free. 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 77

1. (29) Andy Loden
2. (10) Andy Mercer
3. (17) Rob Fuller
4. (59) Coleman Pressley
5. (25) Sam Watts
6. (70) Brit Andersen
7. (01) Roger Powell
8. (43) Jesses LeFevers
9. (60) R A Brown
10. (42) Todd Goble
11. (34) Jared Michalski
12. (57) Grant Wimbish
13. (99) Sean Ballentine
14. (15) Tyler Brown
15. (03) Randy Hawkins
16. (33) James Goff
17. (47) Patrick Molesworth
18. (7) Ashley Huffman
19. (29c) Tyler Church

Jewelry Exchange Limited Late Models 35

1. (17) Kyle Mansch
2. (15) Chazz Anderson
3. (3) Dexter Canipe Jr.
4. (25) Nick Proffitt
5. (28) Jason Crouse
6. (05) Jordan McGregor
7. (75) Eric Evans
8. (07) Tyler Church
9. (84) Donnie Harmon
10. (32) Jeremy Harrell
11. (7) Jason Smith
12. (41) Daniel Goins
13. (76) Barry Helms
14. (66) Travis Byrd

Hickory Street Stocks 30

1. (64) Marshall Sutton
2. (10) Kevin Townsend
3. (99) Jonathan Smith
4. (03) Kevin Eby
5. (25) Jeremy Pelfrey
6. (1) Taylor Stricklin
7. (71) Robert DiVanna
8. (39) Dan Crate
9. (32) David Harrell
10. (20) David Webb
11. (54) J R Kessler
12. (43) Heather Bell

13. (5) Mike Newton

Hickory Pro 4's 25

- 1. (21) Todd Harrington**
- 2. (57) Josh Wimbish**
- 3. (99) Matt Elledge**
- 4. (09) Randy Canipe**
- 5. (66) Scott Wallace**
- 6. (17) Curtis Pardue**
- 7. (98) Rob Lewis**
- 8. (59) Donn Wardo**

Red Baron Race Parts Hobby Stocks 15

- 1. (83) David Hasson**
- 2. (90) Ronnie Sims**
- 3. (5) Mickey Canipe**
- 4. (-1) Ronald Dale McNeil**

WynnCom Pole Award

Bojangles Late Models:

(10) Andy Mercer – 15.067 seconds

Jewelry Exchange Limited Late Model:

(17) Kyle Mansch – 15.810 seconds

Hickory Street Stocks:

(10) Kevin Townsend – 16.994 seconds

Hickory Pro 4's:

(99) Matt Elledge – 16.230 seconds

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