

## LODEN TAKES BACKUP CAR TO VICTORY LANE ON "SIG's TIRE CENTERS NIGHT AT THE RACES"

by GARLAND COLEY

When you experience mechanical difficulties in practice so severe that you park your primary car and pull out the backup machine, this is usually a harbinger of a long and frustrating race night ahead. Someone forgot to tell Andy Loden and his crew that and Loden promptly sat fast time in the #29 machine. Then after losing spots early in the race, rallied to win an especially sweet BOJANGLES LATE MODEL STOCKS victory on "SIG's TIRE CENTERS NIGHT AT THE RACES" Saturday at Hickory Motor Speedway. The usually low-key Loden was excited by his win. All in attendance could tell this as he asked for the checkered flag and took a victory lap. The win in the special 100-lap feature was not easy, and proved why Loden is one of the top drivers at the speedway this decade.



Loden moved out to an early lead after taking the Pole in qualifying, but by lap 7, #59 Coleman Pressley passed Loden, bringing #31 Kyle Grissom with him. On lap 10, #07 Chrissy Wallace moved her machine to 3rd, dropping Loden to 4th, and he continued losing ground. Wallace then moved to Grissom's bumper, and a 3-way fight for the lead ensued with plenty of side by side racing until lap 27, when Wallace's car showed heavy smoke and went to the pits. During the caution, the crew worked feverishly but a broken rear end gear ended her night.



That set up the restart and suddenly Loden came to life as he quickly shot to the high line, and after several laps of furious battle, bypassed both 2nd running Grissom and leader Pressley. Loden pulled away for the next 10 laps, but by the halfway point Pressley and Grissom were back on his rear bumper. For the last 50 laps, Pressley and Grissom took turns moving to Loden's inside and twice made it 3-wide, but Loden would hold on and keep his lead.

Loden held on to win by less than a car length over Grissom in 2nd. Pressley came home 3rd while #19 Kyle Moon was 4th, and #01 Roger Powell rounded out the top five.

"After we pulled this car out, I didn't know what would happen." Loden stated in his usual calm demeanor. Then in reference to his reputation for running the high line, Loden quipped, "Was that high enough for you?"

The win left Loden with a commanding 46-point lead in BOJANGLES LATE MODEL STOCKS standings over Grissom in 2nd, and Moon in 3rd, 114 points behind.

In ADVANCE AUTO PARTS SUPER TRUCKS action, #3 Dexter Canipe Jr. claimed the pole and led all 35 laps en route to the feature victory, but it was the caution on lap 33 that had serious points ramifications for 2 drivers.



While engaged in a torrid battle for second that waged for more than 20 laps, contact between #69 Trevor Hignutt in 2nd and #97 Keith Bumgarner in 3rd resulted in a melee that saw both trucks slam the backstretch wall and go partially airborne with Bumgarner coming to rest in turn 3 and Hignutt's truck limping to a stop at the entrance of pit road. This affected the finishing order with #09 Scott Whittaker in 2nd, 3rd went to #01 J.R. Allen, 4th to #9 Thomas Hartensveld and #16 Mack Little III rounded out the top 5.

Canipe's win, combined with the crash, puts him into the ADVANCE AUTO PARTS SUPER TRUCKS points lead with 432 points. Bumgarner now finds himself 2nd, 14 points behind, and Allen is 3rd, 38 points back.

In exciting Limited Late Models action, #44 Jarit Johnson claimed the pole, and after battling with outside pole sitter #99 Andrew Carlsen for the opening 3 laps, proceeded to lead the rest of the feature, ending a month-long winless spell. This race also produced an incident that affected the points.

On lap 22, after 15 laps of side-by-side battling for 2nd, contact between 2nd place Carlsen and 3rd running #55 Waylon Flynn sent Carlsen spinning. Upon review, track officials penalized Flynn by sending him to the rear of the field.

Following Johnson across the finish line was #94 Josh Wright in 2nd who prevailed in a heated battle with 3rd finishing #15 Kenny Brooks. 4th went to #39 Lee Queen, and Flynn rebounded to finish 5th.

The race resulted in Carlsen's lead dwindling to a 640-618 lead over Flynn in 2nd, and with his win, Johnson closed to only 28 points back.



Pro 4 action saw #16 Randy Freeze win the 25 lap feature over #55 Walter Hoke in 2nd. 3rd went to #57 Grant Wimbish, who survived a lap 12 altercation with #21 Todd Harrington. Meanwhile, Harrington survived that and stalling while leading under the subsequent caution to finish 4th. #7 Chris Allison rounded out the top 5.

Pro 4's points now finds Wimbish with a scant 608-602 point lead over Harrington in 2nd, and 3rd is Hoke, 44 points back.

Finally, on a night that didn't have a race without action or controversy, Street

Stocks action saw #7 Jeff Sparks taking the checkered flag over a hard charging #82 Gary Ledbetter Jr., who started at the rear of the field, due to the rule stating that when you win a previous race you must start in the rear of the field. However, both drivers failed to pass post-race technical inspection and were disqualified. #03 Kevin Eby was declared the winner over #42 Terrence Tucker in 2nd. 3rd went to #64 Marshall Sutton, while #66 Scott Wallace claimed 4th. #32 Jeremy Harrell rounded out the top 5.

The disqualifications allowed Eby, with 518 points, to assume a commanding lead over Ledbetter in 2nd, 58 points behind, and Sparks now finds himself 68 points back.

All of us here at Hickory Motor Speedway would like to thank you, the greatest race fans on earth, for braving the heat and making "SIG's TIRE CENTERS NIGHT AT THE RACES" a success, and we invite you this Saturday night August 18th for "XTREME TROPHIES NIGHT AT THE RACES", featuring all 6 divisions vying for special trophies. Also, mark on your calendar Labor Day Monday, September 3rd, as "DALE EARNHARDT CHEVROLET presents the BOBBY ISAAC MEMORIAL 200." Check [www.hickorymotorspeedway.com](http://www.hickorymotorspeedway.com) for details.



We'll see you next Saturday night at "The Birthplace of the NASCAR Stars". When you miss a week, you miss a LOT!



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