

ASA Late Model Series Press Releases

Leilani Munter will make her ASA Late Model Series debut in the Southern Division on Saturday May 20th at HMS



Indianapolis, Indiana (05/17/2006): Leilani Munter is scheduled to enter her first-ever ASA Late Model Series (ASALMS) event this Saturday. Munter with her SS Racing team will pilot the no. 57 Konica Minolta Chevrolet for the Hickory 100 at Hickory Motor Speedway in Newton (NC). Munter has only one other start with the SS Racing team, which is less than she would have liked heading into her first ASALMS event.

“We had several races planned but weather has been our fiercest competitor so far this year,” said Munter. “Three scheduled races were canceled due to rain.”

Munter knows that the lack of track time will be a challenge heading into Saturday. But she's confident they can still have a solid showing. “I'm looking forward to it. My crew chief Deon Deneau is very smart and I have a great team behind me, so that helps going into a new track and new series,” said Munter.

Deneau spent last season as one of the top known crew chiefs in the ASA Late Model Series, where he worked with Hendrick Motorsports Developmental driver, Chase Austin. And has prior experience working as the crew chief with 3-time ASA Champion Butch Miller. Deneau knows that it takes lots of seat

time to get up front and is also disappointed about missing several scheduled races. But he also shares the belief that they can still run a good race.

“Leilani had a good first race at Illiana Speedway a few weeks ago. We had a plan to bring us up to Hickory and it's unfortunate that the plan was rained out several times,” said Deneau. “But racing always throws something unexpected at you. After being in the game this long I've come to realize that you have to take what comes at you and do your best with each situation.”

Even though Munter is making her first start in the ASALMS with little prior track time, she will gain lots of seat time in 2006. Munter has 30-40 races scheduled this year making it her longest full time season to date.

“I know it's a long season and I just have to be patient,” said Munter. “We're all just anxious to be racing week after week, where we can build off each race and gain momentum.”

The forecast for Saturday's race looks to be in Munter's favor. The report is currently calling for 78 degrees and sunny.

Qualifying for the Hickory 100 begins at 1pm with racing getting under way at 4pm. Click on www.HickoryMotorSpeedway.com for tickets. And be sure to stay locked in to www.SSRacingOnline.com for all the latest news and results.

[Close Window](#)

"LODEN TAKES WIN #8 AT HICKORY SPEEDWAY"

“JESUS TAKES THE WHEEL!”

Newton, NC... Any time Hickory Motor Speedway holds a 100 lap Bojangles' Late Model Stocks event, visiting drivers turn out from other tracks to try what they've got against Hickory's best.

But when the checkers fell on the winner Saturday night, the Top Five in HMS points were the Top Five in the finish.....and Jesus Hernandez was first.

A familiar face was leading the pack when Kevin Leicht, driving the #32, led the field to the green after taking the Denver Marine Pole Award with a lap speed of 15.165 seconds around the .363 mile banked asphalt oval. This was his 7 th LMS Pole of the year. Outside front row was Jesus Hernandez in the MB2 Motorsports/Waste Management #41.

Leicht got a great initial start and took off to let the others fight for who would be first to challenge him for the win. Hernandez wasted no time in setting his sights on Leicht, and soon caught him to begin what would be a door-to-door battle for most of the entire 100 lap event.

Meanwhile, #21 Brian Connor, #29 Andy Loden, #99 Brandon Dean, and #10 Andy Mercer were waging a fierce fight for third position, with no quarter given in an all-out guts show. #59 Coleman Pressley, going into the event third in points standings, was hung in the middle of the 23-car field, trying to use patience to keep his fast car in one piece for a late race charge to the front.

With so much intense racing throughout the field, it was difficult for fans to know which battle to watch.

However, with only a handful of laps left in the event, Hernandez managed to finally take the lead and hold on for his second win of the HMS season. He had this to say in Victory Lane:

“I knew our car was good. We've been working on it and it was just a matter of time. Just trying to wear ‘em out, get back and cool our stuff off, and make another charge. It's awesome.” He went on to thank his sponsors and raceteam.

Pressley made an amazing charge through the field in the late laps of the race to finish second. “We had a really good car tonight. I messed up in qualifying and started us in the back (10 th). That's the best I've felt in a long time. With Mercer and Loden, we each go in there like it's Charlotte, like it's three different lanes. It shows that the Top Five are the Top Five in points, and it's competitive as ever. I just wish that we'd had about three more laps.”

Mercer came in third and was exhilarated. “That was some racing, there! I enjoyed it...it was probably the most fun I've had all year. We had a blast. It was some hard racing.”

The crowd agreed by giving the entire field a standing ovation.

Points leader Leicht finished fourth and retained his points lead. Fifth place finisher Loden remained within 6 points of Leicht in the season-long points chase, with Pressley 6 points behind Loden in third.

Other divisions racing Saturday included the Limited Late Models, Pro-4's, Hobby Stocks, and INEX 600 RACING Legends cars. With a tight points chase in all divisions and the points season getting close to the end, there was hard racing and exciting action in all divisions. Andy Mercer, doing double-duty in Late Models & Limiteds, took the win to pull within four points of Limiteds points leader #44 Matt DiBenedetto, who finished third. #92 Marc Davis finished second and is ten points behind Mercer in third. #43 Jess LeFevers was fourth, with #44X Jarit Johnson fifth.

Pro-4's provided an exciting show with #21 Todd Harrington notching his first win of 2006. Second place finisher #1 Jacob Lehn made up points on leader #4 Adam Beaver when Beaver finished third. #98 Rob Lewis had a strong fourth-place finish, and #17 Curtis Pardue rounded out the top-five. #57 Grant Wimbish had a promising start with his first Pole Award of the season, but left the race mid-way after experiencing engine trouble.

Hobby Stocks had their biggest field of the year take the green flag, but a familiar face was in Victory Lane when #5N Nikki Long won her 4 th race of the year. #90 Ronnie Sims was second, followed by #31 Glenn Maurer third, #07 Denver Jones fourth, and #73 David Hasson fifth. #3 Tim Reece retains the points lead, ahead of #11 Jimmy Whisnant in second, Sims third, #80 Caleb Roark fourth, and Long fifth.

The INEX 600 RACING Legends cars were back at Hickory this week and #29 Clay Hair was again class-of-the-field, after leading the pack from green to checkers.

There was even great action off-track this week, when the Speedway Women's Club hosted their annual "Classic Car Cruise-In" out front of the Speedway, in honor of Old Soldiers' Reunion Week. The "Cruise-In" was open to all "cool cars" and, with no entry fee and each classic car driver receiving on free general admission ticket to the night's events, there was plenty of "eye candy" for all classic car enthusiasts.

A camera crew from national TV show "The George Michael Sports Machine" was also on-hand to tape a feature for an upcoming show.

An on-track Autograph Session with the Bojangles' Late Models allowed fans to go trackside to meet their favorite (and new favorite) drivers. Many of the teams bring autograph cards, candy, and other goodies for the kids for this weekly event.

[Close Window](#)