



KALAMAZOO Speedway TRACK TALK June 13, 2018



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FRIDAY JUNE 15: STOCK FIVE NIGHT

All five classes race when we return to action on Friday, June 15: qualifying, heats and features. The Late Model Sportsman will be running their make-up feature from the season opener (Take III) so they'll be doubling up on June 15. The field is set for the make-up race and qualifying will set the line-up for all of the regular night features. The point leads are shifting each week and we've seen some great racing in all of the weekly classes. We will see you at the races!

Details:	Pits Open	3:30 PM
	Pit Passes	\$30
	Adults	\$12
	Youth 6-12	\$5
	Kids 5 & Under	FREE
	Racing Starts	7:30 PM

NEXT UP AT KALAMAZOO SPEEDWAY

FRIDAY, JUNE 22 STOCK FIVE NIGHT
Howe Patio Double Feature Night
All Five Classes Race
Classic Car Night



SATURDAY, JUNE 30 RED, WHITE & BOOM!

Monster Trucks
Bus & Trailer Races
Novelty Races
Mayhem & Scarecrow
“Wreck Something!”
FIREWORKS



MEETING UP WITH SOME OF OUR DRIVERS

DON PORTER is one of Kalamazoo Speedway's more seasoned drivers. A longtime friend of Tony LoBretto (2017 Zoo Stock Season Champion), he and Tony raced a generation (or two) ago and make a February trek to Florida each year to catch as many short track races as possible before returning to the snowy north to wait for the Michigan racing season to begin. When Tony got the racing itch again, Don and daughter Melanie became Tony's crew but this year Don is back in the driver's seat. Laughingly calling it "foolishness" he is loving being back behind the wheel of a race car. Don says with the Zoo Stock rule changes his car is really too heavy to be a contender but with high car counts each night, there has been a B and sometimes C feature where he can be competitive and he's content to race there. This has been a time of great joy and great sorrow for Don. He became a grandfather for the first time on Christmas Day when daughter Melanie and husband Drew had their first child, lost his mom on April 19 and then became a grandfather a second time when daughter Sarah and her husband Drew (what are the odds?!) had their first child on May 30. Sarah and Drew currently work for Kalamazoo Speedway.



JERRY BALLARD raced as a Rent-a-Ride driver on July 7 of last year. He took the checked flag in his heat race but didn't fare quite as well in the feature, placing 18 in a field of 22. A true Rent-a-Ride driver, he'd never raced on a paved track nor piloted a stock car before climbing into the driver's seat. Jerry said he'd done a little bump and run on a dirt track but that just isn't the same as short track racing. Jerry hangs out with the Sweat family and had watched a few races with them prior to taking his spin in the rental. He made sure we were aware of Brandon Sweat's accident at Silver Lake and

Brandon's steps toward recovery. Buddy Head is doing some mentoring of the Sweat brothers and Jerry mentioned he's benefitting from this assistance as well. Jerry didn't bring it up, but it's clear Jerry has some talent. In his rookie season he has finished in the Top 10 in each of the 4 nights the Zoo Stocks have raced and in the Top 5 in two of those (a second and fourth place finish). He's clocked fast time once, won a heat race and currently sits third in the point standings.



The personable **PETE DOXEY** has raced two races this year (he teaches in Colorado and spends his summers in Michigan). He arrived in Michigan on Thursday, May 24, got in his race car on Friday, May 25—and won the Outlaw FWD “A” feature. He attributes his success to his dad who he says is very mechanically inclined. Pete joked before the June 1 races that he better not have any issues during the races as he's flying solo. Credit also needs to go to Pete; we know that a quality car can only take a driver so far, the driver has to be a champion as well. Pete said before the race that he was looking forward to racing Paul Bittle and Jason Essex. Pete came in second to Essex on June 1 and was ahead of Bittle when Bittle retired with 5 laps to go. Pete clocked the fastest time in the feature with a 15.310 (88.178 MPH) lap. With two solid outings at the Speedway in 2018, Pete has already put his stamp on the Outlaw FWD class and has claimed the #7 spot in the point standings.



At 14, **TAYLOR IMUS** is one of the Speedway's youngest drivers. While not racing for points this year due to a summer schedule that won't allow her to be at the track each week, she is currently tied for 6th place in the Outlaw FWD class. Her dad's a big fan and took a bit of ribbing from another member of her pit crew so we've included him in a photo. Taylor is a graduate of the Little Kalamazoo Speedway where she earned her fair share of racing honors. Last year she swept the Unrestricted Animal Class Track Championships for the Tuesday, Friday and Saturday Night Race Series. She was also the 2017 Driver of the Year. Taylor is enjoying racing on the larger track and racing against more than two people at a time. She finds she has more reaction time at Kalamazoo Speedway but

commented it's also easier to wreck. With the experience thus far this year, Taylor says she feels like she's getting the hang of it and racing has become easier than it was at the start of the year.



DON TEADT is also racing full-time this year after first taking a spin in a Rent-a-Ride given to him as a gift in 2016 and then buying himself a Rent-a-Ride in 2017. He describes both experiences as a “blast” and he’s continuing to have a blast in his first full-time season of racing in the Zoo Stock class. Don’s wife, Mary, is supportive of his efforts. Don and Mary noted there was a bit of negotiation that went into bringing racing into their lives. For every dollar Don spends on the car, a dollar goes to Mary who has designated her fund for travel—and Don will be going with her. Mary says it’s a bit difficult watching the race and Don’s tangling with the wall hasn’t helped. Don says despite having to do some rebuilding it’s all part of racing and the season has been everything he hoped it would be. Mary is looking forward to the traveling they will be doing together.



For 2018 **RENAE LETTS** has a new and faster car with a new blue color scheme and says she is still learning the #2 car’s finer points. Renae notes says she loves the adrenalin rush she gets from racing and doesn’t miss the Zoo Stocks running in the opposite direction on random nights. She’s proud of racing in a male dominated sport and beating the guys at their own sport. She first raced two years ago in a car her husband **CHRIS LETTS**, also a Zoo Stock driver, bought her. Her inaugural race? Super Shoe! Son **KEEGAN** has also joined the Zoo Stocks this year. Says Chris about how he feels about Renae racing he quipped it means extra time in the shop. Renae says Chris is providing driving tips so she can preserve her tires, something she’s been churning through thus far this year. Chris tried out a Rent-a-Ride in 2016 and then bought his own car. Renae finished 8th in the points last year in the Zoo Stocks. This year she’s running in 6th, Chris is 10th and Keegan is running 36th out of the 58 drivers who have raced in the Zoo Stocks this year. (See next page for photos)



WIN AN ENCLOSED TRAILER

Pick up your raffle tickets at the ticket windows at the Speedway for your chance to win the pictured 24" enclosed trailer donated by Techworks Trailer Sales and Team Spirit Custom Trailers. Kalamazoo Speedway cannot adequately express its gratitude to Walt Obrieski and Mike Stutzman for donating a trailer for an unprecedented third consecutive year. All raffle tickets proceeds go to the Zoo Kares for Kids program to bring a little extra cheer to kids at the holidays. Tickets are \$5 per ticket or 5 for \$20. The winning ticket will be drawn over Super Shoe weekend. Winners need not be present to win.



BEN RABER (June 10, 1984 – June 9, 2018)



Please keep Ben Raber's family and friends in your hearts and prayers. Ben was killed in a single car accident over the weekend. Ben had a passion for racing and holds the 2011 Modifieds Season Championship at Kalamazoo Speedway. He was active in the start-up of the Little Kalamazoo Speedway and continued his involvement there over the years. Visitation is scheduled for Wednesday, June 13 with his funeral following on June 14. Please click on the link below for details or to leave a message for the family.



<http://www.langelands.com/obituaries/Benjamin-Raber/>

