



Double Features Doubled the Excitement at the Roper Classic

Race Recap

Last Saturday, June 2nd, Lebanon I-44 Speedway opened its gates for night number two of the 2018 season. The Roper Classic was a very exciting night of racing to say the least, with double features for each class and the debut of the new inner track. 10 feature races were run on Saturday night and a different driver found their way to Victory Lane in each feature!

Chargers and Hornets

To kick off the night, the Chargers and Hornets took to the track for their first feature. The new inner track provided even more excitement than anticipated! For 15 laps Hornet driver, Will Garner, and Charger driver, Billy Taylor, battled it out. Garner and Taylor took the checkered flag side-by-side, a photo-finish was a great way to kick off the night. Billy Taylor was credited with the win for the Chargers and Will Garner took home the win for the Hornet division. In feature number two, Tyson Moore took control of the race early with Shannon Geller in-tow. Geller made the pass for the lead at the halfway point of the race and managed to hold on until the checkered flag. Behind Geller, Tyson Moore, Will Garner, and Chris Albright battled it out for the last two spots on the podium. Garner ended up 2nd and Albright rounded out the top 3. Geller collected the win for the Hornet division and Dennis Williams was the highest finishing Charger driver picking up the win for that division. The ultra-short track provided side-by-side, and sometimes three-wide, racing action!



Big 10 Late Model drivers, Justin Blake (7), Jimmy Fohn (48), and Dylan Bates (191) racing around the High Banks. Photo By Jamie Martin

Big 10 Late Model Series

The second division to hit the track was the new Big 10 Late Model Series. In the first feature, veteran driver Kennie Dickinson started on the pole and took command of the race while the rest of the pack fought for position. For the first five laps, Lebanon's Justin Blake held onto 2nd until Jimmy Fohn and Dylan Bates found their way around. For the remainder of the race, Fohn and Bates did everything they could to reel in Dickinson. Fohn nearly got to the rear bumper of Dickinson, but he just ran out of time. The tables turned in the second feature. Fohn started front row outside and took control of the race from there. Dickinson and Bates fell in line behind the leader and had a battle of their own throughout the remainder of the race. Jimmy Fohn was this year's first repeat winner as he took home the trophy in the 2nd feature with Dickinson and Bates rounding out the podium.

Street Stocks

Next up were the Street Stocks. In the first feature, Ben Johnson and Brock Johnson made up the front row. When the green flag came out, the No. 90 of Steve Shaw quickly jumped into the number two spot behind Brock Johnson. Shaw maintained 2nd place until lap 9 when Aaron Douglas, who came all the way from the back, made the pass for second. After Douglas got around Shaw he quickly went to work on Johnson and took over the lead on lap 10. Meanwhile, Jordan Nisbett snuck into the top 3 and took 3rd away from Shaw. Douglas took the checkers with Johnson behind him with Jordan Nisbett in-tow. After the race a shock protest was placed on the No. 7 of Douglas, meaning that Brock Johnson was credited with the win for the first feature. In the second feature, Ben Johnson and Steve Shaw led the field to the green, but Jordan Nisbett quickly worked his way around traffic and was the leader at the end of the first lap. By the end of the 2nd lap Aaron Douglas had

once again come from the back and was in the number two spot. Nisbett maintained the lead until lap 9 when Douglas completed the pass. At the line it was Douglas, Nisbett and Brock Johnson rounding out the top 3.

Modifieds

Then the ground-pounding Modifieds took to the track. Chris Johnson and Brian Lewis made up the front row as they took the green flag, by the end of the first lap Brian found himself in the lead with Chris Johnson and Michael Juergenson battling hard for the second position. On lap 6 Johnson caught Lewis and made the pass for the lead but just two short laps after the pass was made contact was made between some of the lead cars sending Richard Lewis around forcing Brian Lewis and Mark Riddle hard into the turn four wall, both cars had to be towed from the race track. After the red flag, Fair Grove's Ricky Icenhower took advantage of the restart and made his way to the lead on lap 9 with Johnson and Juergenson behind him. Icenhower maintained the lead for the rest of the race and Juergenson managed to pull off a last lap pass for second while Chris Johnson rounded out the top 3. In the second feature, Richard Lewis started on the pole and took command of the race early while Icenhower and Juergenson tried to reel him in. On lap 14 Juergenson and Icenhower managed to get around Lewis, but just one lap later contact was made between Icenhower and Juergenson bringing out the yellow and sending both cars to the rear of the field. This put Richard Lewis back into the lead and he was able to pick up his first win of the 2018 season with his father, Brian Lewis in 2nd and Chris Johnson in 3rd.

Pro Late Models

Last but definitely not least, the Pro Late Models! The Pro Late Models ran two 27 lap features in honor of the Roper family's iconic number 54 race cars. In the first feature, Tim Swearengin made quick moves to take the lead, but at the end of the first lap the red flag was displayed due to a major pile-up in the middle of the pack. The wreck sent veteran drivers, Steve Holt, and JC Newell to their trailers early, along with Justin Blake. Jimmy Vanzandt and Jimmy Fohn were also involved in the incident but were able to make quick repairs and re-enter the race. When the green flag came back out Tim Swearengin jumped back into the lead with Jake Piel hot on his heels. Behind the lead cars, Brian Brown and Bobby Russ Wood battled for the number three spot allowing Kennie Dickinson and Jimmy Vanzandt to catch up. On lap 25, contact was made, and Bobby Wood spun toward the infield bringing out the caution and sending him to the rear of the field. The green flag was displayed once again, and Tim Swearengin was able to hang on for the remaining two laps picking up his first win of the 2018 season with last year's Rookie of the Year, Jake Piel, in 2nd and Kennie Dickinson in 3rd. In the second feature, Bobby Russ Wood and Kennie Dickinson led the field to the green and they ran 1st and 2nd for most of the race. Swearengin and Vanzandt did what they could to navigate traffic and catch the two leaders. On lap 18, Vanzandt took the number three spot away from Swearengin. When the checkered flag was displayed it was all Bobby Wood, Tim Swearengin's teammate on the Carmichael Racing Team. Kennie Dickinson took home 2nd and Vanzandt brought home 3rd. It was a clean-sweep for the Carmichael Racing Team picking up the win in both features!

Be sure to join us on June 16th for night number three of the 2018 season! This show will feature a special 50-lap Modified race, the Hillbilly 50! Also, there will be a kid's power-wheel race! Load up the family and your power-wheels and head on out to Lebanon I-44 Speedway! The grandstands open at 6:00PM and racing starts at 7:30PM, Adults are \$12.00 and kids 10 and under are always free! Until then, head over to over to our Facebook page or our website at i44speedway.net to keep up with track news and updates!

By Dylan Bates