

Kicking Up The Dirt – USC Sprintcar Series Round 3

Joanne White

Last night twenty-seven Sprintcars took to the high banks of Hi-Tech Oils Speedway in Toowoomba for Ultimate Pink Night to raise some money for the National Breast Cancer Foundation and help drive out Breast Cancer. It was a massive night full of thrills, and spills, with each driver and team adding a little, or in some cases a lot, of pink to their cars and crew uniforms in support of Ultimate Pink Night. The night was also the Will Power 500 and Round Three of the Queensland USC series and while the competition was fierce, at the end of the night it was current series leader Luke Oldfield who took the win to extend his series points lead. Andrew Scheuerle came from position fourteen on the starting grid in the A-Main after an unfortunate incident during the heat events, but had a spectacular run to climb through the field and into second by the time chequered flag flew. Kevin Titman ultimately started the A-Main race from the front row but faded quickly during the first half of the race, only to come back strongly on the high side mid-race and begin to make up ground. Titman and his team had the Q59 set up beautifully and as the laps wore on Titman really stepped up the pace, making his way back into third and really taking the challenge to Scheuerle as the pair argued over second. Bryan Mann and Lachlan McHugh rounded out the top five finishers.

Qualifying got underway and it was Lachlan McHugh who topped the leader board at the end of the qualifying runs, stopping the clock at a quick 11.664 seconds. Kevin Titman proved right from the beginning that he was going to be a strong player in the proceedings and piloted the immaculately presented Q59 car into second position with an 11.743 second lap. Bryan Mann completed the top three, stopping the clock at 11.746 seconds, just three thousandths of a second slower than Titman, while Ben Hilder and Allan Woods completed the fastest five qualifiers. Luca Cox drifted a little too high on his second qualifying lap before clipping the wall and somewhat gently tipping the N91 car on its side. Cox was able to restart the car but his qualifying was over, while Danny Reidy had some engine problems in the Q19 racer and while he did complete one qualifying lap, he was going to have a lot of work to do for the rest of the night to make up lost ground.

Heat one started with Lachlan McHugh and Andrew Wright sharing the front row for the start, with Wright getting a brilliant start on the top side and getting his nose in front when the lights went green. McHugh however was fast on the bottom and challenged for the lead, the pair essentially running wheel-to-wheel for the opening lap. Wright eventually managed to secure the lead, and began opening a small lead over McHugh in second, while Peter Lack was on a charge in the Q5 racer and had made his way up to third after just two laps. As the laps wore on the field started to spread out but as the leaders approached the tail end of the field and prepared to start lapping the back markers, both McHugh and Lack closed in on Wright and the battle for the lead really began to heat up. McHugh was simply brilliant and remained focused on the leader, timing his move perfectly just moments after the white flag flew. Lachlan McHugh slid beautifully under Wright to steal the lead with less than lap to run and went on to take the win ahead of Andrew Wright, Peter Lack, Darren Kane and Brent Kratzmann. Rob Hamilton, Wayne Iacono, Scott Genrich and Anthony Vanderreyden rounded out the finishers.

Hard chargers Kevin Titman and Luke Oldfield shared the front row for the start of heat two, with Callum Walker and Nelson Reddacliff out of the second row. Titman got a brilliant start and quickly secured the race lead ahead of Oldfield. Titman began opening a small margin while Oldfield tried to close the gap, but further back in the field the battle was raging between Sean Iacono and Nelson Reddacliff, the pair almost coming to disaster as they fought over track position. Dave Whell slowed on the top-side, and circulated slowly, trying to stay out of the way, while Danny Reidy, seeming to have sorted out the problems in the Q19 car, was on a mission to make up lost ground. Reidy worked the top side perfectly as he raced around both Iacono and Reddacliff, but there was little anyone could do to catch Titman. Kevin Titman went on to take the win in heat two, leading

Luke Oldfield, Callum Walker, Danny Reidy, Nelson Reddacliff, Sean Iacono, Clem Hoffmans, Kristy Bonsey and Dave Whell across the line.

Heat Three, the final heat that would see the fastest qualifiers start from the front of the field, hit the track with Bryan Mann and Ben Hilder to share the front row and lead the field to the green, all with Allan Woods and Andrew Scheuerle close on their tail tanks. Mann quickly secured the lead when the lights went green, while Woods was flying as he raced underneath Hilder to swiftly steal second. Woods was on a mission and soon began challenging Mann for control of the race, while Hilder tried to defend his position from a very hard charging Jayden Peacock. Peacock, back after a massive crash in Brisbane just a week ago that saw him almost clear the catch fence, made his way past Hilder before inheriting second when Woods had a spin and dropped back to fifth. Andrew Scheuerle was trying to find a way past Ben Hilder, and while Scheuerle worked the low line the pair raced side-by-side as Hilder tried to maintain his track position. Scheuerle eventually moved ahead of Hilder but Hilder fought back hard and really put on a show for the fans on the hill, until he was forced on the defensive as Woods tried to claw back another position after his earlier mistake. Bryan Mann took the win ahead of Jayden Peacock and Andrew Scheuerle, with Ben Hilder, Allan Woods, Brodie Tulloch, Drew Gessner, Brett Minett and Luca Cox rounding out the finishers.

Kristy Bonsey started heat four from pole position with Brent Kratzmann alongside and a tough field behind. Bonsey got the jump on the start but Kratzmann took to the high line and immediately challenged for the lead. Kratzmann skilfully took control of the race while Peter Lack followed him on the high side and made his own way around Bonsey to steal second. Luke Oldfield and Lachlan McHugh were both making their way through the field, spending just a couple of laps making their way into third and fourth respectively, while Kratzmann opened a comfortable lead over Lack and Oldfield. Scott Genrich and Nelson Reddacliff had a great battle midfield, while back at the front of the field the leaders were closing in on the back markers. Oldfield lunged under Lack to steal second and began chasing Kratzmann in the lead. Lapped traffic enabled Oldfield to get closer to Kratzmann and a frantic last lap made things exciting for the race fans. A last corner charge on the inside of Kratzmann and a drag race across the line thrilled the crowd, with Brent Kratzmann managing to hang on to take the win. Luke Oldfield crossed the line in second ahead of Peter Lack and Lachlan McHugh, with Sean Iacono, Scott Genrich, Kristy Bonsey, Nelson Reddacliff and Anthony Vanderreyden rounding out the finishers.

Luca Cox and Clem Hoffmans led the field to the green for the start of heat five, with Brodie Tulloch and Callum Walker from the second row. Hoffmans got the jump on the start but Walker was brilliant on the high side as he challenged for the lead. Unfortunately though a rare mistake from Walker when he spun the Q33 racer almost brought the field undone, with several cars extremely lucky to avoid contact. Andrew Scheuerle however was unable to avoid the spun car and made heavy contact with the Q33 racer before inverting his own Q25 car, while Ben Hilder tried to get around the outside of the stranded Walker car only to make unavoidable contact as well. All three drivers walked away from the incident but none were able to restart the event, with each team having a lot of work to do if the cars were to make it back trackside later in the night. A full restart followed with Cox this time securing the lead when the green flag flew. A small mistake was enough of an invitation for Kevin Titman who quickly seized the opportunity and raced through on the inside to steal the lead. Tulloch was quick to follow Titman, he too working the bottom to get under Cox while Danny Reidy was on a charge and searching for a way around Tulloch. When Tulloch switched to the high side Reidy quickly moved on the bottom, but before long the race came under caution when Tulloch slowed to a stop with mechanical issues in the Q74 racer. Luca Cox had a large fire on board the N91 racer, with the Sprintcars Queensland and Hi-Tec Oils Speedway Fire and Crash Crews quick to respond and extinguish the flames. Cox was able to walk away from the incident and while the crash crews and fire guys do not often get the credit they deserve, it is times like these that we as family, friends, crews and fans are eternally thankful for their invaluable

contributions to keeping our drivers as safe as possible and making sure they are ok. With both Tulloch and Cox now also out of the race, only three cars remained for the final five laps of heat five. Kevin Titman led the restart and in five laps managed to open a sizable lead before taking the win ahead of Danny Reidy and Clem Hoffmans. Brodie Tulloch, Luca Cox, Ben Hilder, Andrew Scheuerle, Callum Walker and Dave Whell all failed to finish the event.

The sixth and final heat event of the night saw Wayne Iacono start from pole position with Jayden Peacock alongside, with Rob Hamilton and Allan Woods right behind. Iacono got the jump on the start and took control of the race but Peacock took to the high side and thrilled the crowd as he challenged for the lead. Allan Woods slowed to a stop and brought the race under caution after just two laps, with Iacono set to lead the restart from Peacock and Brett Minett while Woods retired to the infield. Peacock again took to the top side and beautifully worked the high line until he eventually stole the lead from Iacono, while Bryan Mann began to make his way closer to the front of the field with Andrew Wright close behind and ready to strike. Mann and Wright raced side-by-side for several laps as the pair tried to find a way past Minett, with the trio exchanging positions several times. Wright eventually made his way through, leaving Minett to try and defend his position from Mann, and a hard charging Darren Kane. Jayden Peacock took the win while Wayne Iacono hung on to finish second despite a last corner charge by Wright. Andrew Wright crossed the line in third and led Brett Minett, Darren Kane, Bryan Mann, Rob Hamilton and Drew Gessner across the line. Allan Woods did not finish the race.

The Bronze Shootout got underway, after a short delay while Darren Kane switched from the Super Sedan to the Sprintcar for consecutive events, with qualifiers in positions five, six, seven and eight the first to hit the track. Peter Lack, Jayden Peacock and Bryan Mann joined Kane on track for three qualifying laps, with the fastest two cars to transfer to the Silver Shootout. Peter Lack went quick time with a quick 11.631 second lap, with Jayden Peacock securing second fastest after stopping the clock at 11.675 seconds. Bryan Mann and Darren Kane would share the fourth row of the starting grid in the A-Main after finishing third and fourth in the Bronze Shootout.

For the Silver Shootout Peter Lack and Jayden Peacock were joined on track by Luke Oldfield and Andrew Wright for another three qualifying laps. Lack stuck to the low side and quickly set the benchmark at 11.747 seconds, only for Andrew Wright to better that time on his second lap, stopping the clock at 11.699 seconds to his transfer to the Gold Shootout along with Peter Lack. Jayden Peacock was third quickest ahead of Luke Oldfield, and while the pair were eliminated from the Shootout events, they would share the third row on the starting grid in the up-coming A-Main race.

Lachlan McHugh and Kevin Titman joined Andrew Wright and Peter Lack on track for the Gold Shootout with Lack again favouring the bottom and setting the early benchmark once more. This time it was a 11.752 second opening lap that was untouchable until McHugh snuck in a quick 11.642 on the final circulation that secured the teenager pole position for the main event. Peter Lack was second in the Gold Shootout and would share the front row for the start of the A-Main with McHugh. Andrew Wright and Kevin Titman rounded out the Gold Shootout contenders and would start alongside each other on the second row for the main race.

The B-Main race saw Wayne Iacono from pole position with Sean Iacono alongside and Clem Hoffmans and Rob Hamilton from the second row. Sean Iacono got the jump when the lights went green, but Wayne Iacono managed to get through on the inside as they rounded turn one and managed to steal the lead. Brett Minett was running the high side and battling with Drew Gessner, with Vanderreyden closing in fast. Vanderreyden made contact with the back of Gessner in the Q90 car usually driven by Anthony Lambert, which resulted in Gessner spinning and leaving Kristy Bonsey nowhere to go. Bonsey made heavy contact with the spun car of Gessner and did enough

damage to her own rear end that it ended her race after just one lap, while both Vanderreyden and Gessner restarted the event. Wayne Iacono led the restart from Sean Iacono, Hamilton and Hoffmans, with Minett quick to move into fourth. Hamilton raced under Sean Iacono and set out after the race leader, leaving Sean to battle with Brett Minett. There were a number of racing grooves on the track, but there were also some ruts forming and making it a little tricky to get a smooth run, and while Wayne Iacono was way out in front, a small error saw him spin the Q20 racer onto the edge of the infield and throw away the race lead. Wayne Iacono restarted at the rear of the field while Rob Hamilton inherited the race lead with four laps to run. Brett Minett was penalised two positions for passing before the cone on the previous restart and quickly started trying to make up lost ground, but all eyes were on the rear of the field where Drew Gessner, Anthony Vanderreyden and Wayne Iacono were racing three wide through the corner for the minor places. Vanderreyden and Iacono came together, with Vanderreyden inverting the ACT72 racer, before landing on top of Iacono. Both drivers were ok but unable to restart the race, with Vanderreyden quickly heading back to the pits to get ready for his next race in his Legend Car. It was during this stoppage that the race was declared after just eleven laps, with Rob Hamilton the winner and Sean Iacono, Brett Minett and Clem Hoffmans all securing transfers to the A-Main race. Drew Gessner was the only other finisher of the event, with Anthony Vanderreyden, Wayne Iacono and Kristy Bonsey all unfortunately failing to finish the event.

An impressive field of twenty sprintcars rolled out for the 30-lap A-Main event last night, with Lachlan McHugh and Peter Lack from the front row. Lack is always brilliant around the Toowoomba track, something just clicks between car and driver and track and it is breath-taking to watch and last night initially looked to be another of those nights. Lack got the jump when the lights went green, quickly securing the race lead but immediately under enormous pressure from McHugh. The pair argued over the lead for the first lap, racing wheel-to-wheel with Lack on the top-side and McHugh challenging on the bottom. It was mesmerising, and while Andrew Scheuerle had started making headway deep in the field, it was hard not to watch Lack and McHugh as they thrilled the crowd. Unfortunately it barely lasted a lap, with contact between the two as they exited turn four enough to launch the Q5 racer of Lack into the air. Lack bounced around and pirouetted but somehow managed to avoid getting up side down, however the car sustained enough damage to very prematurely end his race. Lack, who was the defending Will Power 500 Champion, was unhurt in the incident, while Allan Woods suffered damage to the front end of his Q28 racer in the chaos. Officials allowed the Woods team to change the front tyre and some quick work by the crew saw Woods take part in the restart.

A full race restart followed, this time with Kevin Titman on the front row alongside Lachlan McHugh, with Andrew Wright and Luke Oldfield right behind them. McHugh quickly secured the lead while Titman held down second. Titman ran the high line but opened the door enough for Andrew Wright to slip through and advance into second, while Brent Kratzmann began working his way forward, all the while under pressure from a hard charging Andrew Scheuerle. Luke Oldfield managed to find his way past Titman, while Kratzmann gained the advantage over Jayden Peacock as he raced ever closer to the front of the field. It wasn't long before McHugh entered lapped traffic, seemingly effortlessly weaving past the back markers and putting the Q23 racer wherever he needed to get the job done. In lapped traffic Oldfield managed to catch McHugh and, in a few laps, managed to quietly sneak through on the inside to steal the lead. McHugh fought back valiantly on the low side, thrilling the crowd, but Oldfield was already starting to pull away and Wright didn't hesitate when the opportunity to steal second presented itself. Titman was working the high side beautifully and making up ground, while Kratzmann continued his charge towards the front of the field. Wright dropped to the low line and slowed after clipping the wall and suffering a flat right rear tyre, but Kratzmann came through and collided with the back of the N78 racer before rolling his Q2 car in turn four. Moments later Darren Kane had a massive flip in the background and while he took his time getting out of the wreck he walked away from the broken car. Kane, feeling a little

worse for wear after the crash, returned to the pits to get ready for the upcoming Super Sedan feature (which he went on to win), his night of Sprintcar competition well and truly over. Kratzmann was unhurt in his crash but the car suffered enough front-end damage to end his race as well.

Luke Oldfield led the restart from Lachlan McHugh, Andrew Scheuerle, Bryan Mann and Kevin Titman, with Titman stealing the show when the race resumed. Titman immediately took to the high line around Mann, while mid-field Callum Walker and Ben Hilder had a thrilling battle amongst themselves. Danny Reidy had a great run in the Q19 racer, taking to the top side as he tried to race around the outside of Mann with thirteen laps left to run. Allan Woods was having a crack at the high line but spun the Q28 racer and parked the front end on top of the concrete wall on the inside edge of the track.

When the race resumed once more it was again Luke Oldfield who led the field to the green, with Lachlan McHugh and Andrew Scheuerle right on his tail tank with thirteen laps left to run. McHugh ran the top while Scheuerle challenged on the bottom, both drivers giving the other just enough racing room and showing plenty of respect. Scheuerle, who almost missed the A-Main as his crew, with help from the McHugh team, worked feverishly to repair the damage from the earlier heat incident, eventually managed to secure second, experience winning out in the end. McHugh was relentless on the top-side as he continued to fight Scheuerle for position, while Titman came on stronger with each passing lap. Luke Oldfield was well and truly in control of the race and had a comfortable lead, while Ben Hilder raced up the inside of Jayden Peacock with just nine laps left to run. Unfortunately though the race was soon brought to another stop as Jayden Peacock had a massive crash in turn four after catching a rut. After his huge crash in Brisbane last weekend, and a big week building a new car, Peacock had been having such a strong run, so another big wreck is all the more disappointing for the young and talented racer. Peacock did walk away from the wreck but is no doubt feeling it today.

Luke Oldfield again led the restart when the race got back underway, this time with Andrew Scheuerle up to second ahead of Lachlan McHugh and Kevin Titman. Titman immediately took to the high line once more as he raced around McHugh, before having a massive look on the outside of Scheuerle as he challenged for second. It was bold, it was exciting and it was hard not to watch as the pair held nothing back and put on a mesmerising show for the fans. The pair almost came to disaster at one point, but Scheuerle managed to hang on to second, while Titman put in some brilliant laps and captivated the crowd. Bryan Mann slid under Lachlan McHugh, only for McHugh to fire straight back, the pair exchanging positions several times as they negotiated over track position. Callum Walker, who had been having a solid run but staying out trouble, soon joined the fight, slipping under McHugh in the final few laps of the race, only for McHugh to steal the position back. Luke Oldfield took the win ahead of Andrew Scheuerle and Kevin Titman, with Bryan Mann and Lachlan McHugh rounding out the top five. Callum Walker was next across the line and led Ben Hilder, Danny Reidy, Allan Woods, Rob Hamilton, Nelson Reddacliff and Sean Iacono home. Brett Minett, Jayden Peacock, Scott Genrich, Andrew Wright, Brent Kratzmann, Darren Kane, Clem Hoffmans and Peter Lack all failed to finish the event.

Sprintcars Queensland will return to AusDeck Patios Archerfield Speedway next Saturday night, 12 November 2016, for Round Five of the Sprintcar Track Championship. Has Andrew Scheuerle finally managed to outrun his bad luck? Can Peter Lack, Brent Kratzmann, Jayden Peacock and Darren Kane do the same? Only time will tell but one thing is certain – it will be a show not to be missed, and the last hit out for our teams before World Series Sprintcars rolls into town later this month. Come on out to AusDeck Patios Archerfield Speedway next Saturday night and see the racing for yourself – it will be a show not to be missed! See you trackside!