

Emotional Wirick Triumphs In Evans-Hostetler Classic at Shady Bowl

By Shawn Sell

It was an emotional victory lane celebration for Daniel Wirick on Saturday night (August 28) at Shady Bowl Speedway as he claimed victory in the annual Evans-Hostetler Dwarf Car Classic. Wirick, the grandson of Bill Hostetler, one of the race's namesakes along with Max Evans, made a bold three-wide pass in lapped traffic coming to the white flag to score the biggest win of his young career.

It appeared the night would belong to Michigan ace Eric Hoffman, the 2007 winner of the Classic as he jumped into the early lead and opened up a sizable advantage. Hoffman was originally slated to start fifth on the grid, but after a series of bad starts coming to the green and some rapidly ensuing attrition, the two-time Midwest Classic Racers series champion lined up on the outside pole. Hoffman led the first 18 counters, only to lose the lead to Wirick in turn four just short of the checkers.

"I enjoy it (the Classic race) every time and just try to do my best," Wirick said in a post-race interview. "I do it for him (Hostetler) and it's like I am just following in his foot steps. I am proud to be the driver of his car and am happy he lets me drive it. It was an honor to win this race."

The night got off to a rough start with several restarts needed before a lap could be completed. Outside pole sitter Dave Wylie was the victim of the first failed start, leaving on the hook after a turn one incident that also sent Todd Getz to the hill for repairs. The next attempt at the green saw pole sitter Troy Hoffman hit the starting cone, sending the Michigan driver to the tail. Mechanical gremlins struck early, knocking Ohio rookie Connie Smith out of the event and sending defending race winner Brandon Basye to the hill for repairs and Jon Wylie into the infield. Both Basye and Wylie returned as the event went green, but neither was able to factor in the outcome. Basye's recurring axel problems retired him early, while the fuel delivery issues in Wylie's mount put him down a lap early in the contest.

Once the field finally took the green, the event went to the checker without a caution. Hoffman broke out to a sizable lead early on with Wirick, Bob Basye, and Rob Roney all giving chase. Wirick finally closed in on Hoffman late in the going and made the winning pass around Hoffman and the lapped car of Getz coming to the white flag. Wirick then held off one last challenge from Hoffman to snag the \$400 first prize and a beautiful trophy donated by the Champaign County Habitat for Humanity.

Joining representatives from the Habitat in victory lane for the trophy presentation were Evans and Hostetler, two-long time friends and pioneers of dwarf car racing in Ohio. Hoffman took runner-up honors with Roney grabbing third after overtaking Bob Basye for the spot near the race's midpoint. Jeff Slayton rounded out the evening's top five.

A pair of heat races started the evening's festivities and the first prelim was all Roney. The two-time MCR Champion blasted into the lead from his outside pole starting spot to

lead flag-to-flag. Getz ran second until Bob Basye moved past on lap five to snare the position. Heat number two saw Brandon Basye make a daring three-wide move in turn two on the first lap to roar to victory over Wirick and pole sitter Eric Hoffman.

The OVDCA would like to thank the following for their contributions to the 2010 Evans-Hostetler Classic: Shady Bowl Speedway and the Stapleton Family, Piqua Transfer and Storage, Ohio Caverns, Hill and Hamilton Insurance, Steve Martin and the Midwest Classic Racers and the Champaign County Habitat For Humanity.

Evans-Hostetler Classic Results

Heat winners: Rob Roney, Brandon Basye

Feature: 1. Daniel Wirick, 2. Eric Hoffman, 3. Rob Roney, 4. Bob Basye, 5. Jeff Slayton, 6. Todd Getz, 7. Troy Hoffman, 8. Josh Tinker, 9. Jon Wylie, 10. Donnie Eaton, 11. Jim Oldiges, 12. Brandon Basye, 13. Jordan Ferrell, 14. Connie Smith, 15. Jerry Russell, 16. Dave Wylie. DNS-Mike Hicks