

PRP Press Release – Cletus Classic – By: Chuck Greenslate

Portsmouth Raceway Park fans were treated to one of the closest Late Model finishes in the 28-year history of the track Saturday night, as Brandon Fouts nipped Eddie Carrier, Jr. by a nose at the stripe.

Brian Skaggs was dominant in the Modified Division's annual **Cletus Classic**. John Melvin returned to winner's circle in the Limited Lates, and in the Sport Mod Division, 15-year-old Breydan Berry took advantage of a couple of opportune cautions to make it three wins in a row.

PRP's third race of the season brought some incredible racing on a track that was the fastest it had been all year, as seven different drivers turned laps south of 15 seconds during the Impact Race Gear Late Model Time Trials.

Fouts set quick time to start off his evening right, but it was the end of the Kite, KY driver's night that brought PRP fans to their feet. After stalking Carrier for 24 of the Giovanni's Pizza Late Model A-Main's 25 laps, Fouts managed to nose ahead of Carrier at the finish line winning by a margin of one hundredth of a second.

Fouts became the first driver other than Carrier to win a PRP Late Model feature thus far this season. While Carrier fell short in his bid to remain unbeaten at Portsmouth Raceway Park so far in 2018, the Salt Rock, WV racer did add to his point lead.

In his first PRP outing of the year, Wheelersburg's RJ Conley drove home to a third-place finish. Jackson's Jason Montgomery placed fourth, and Martin, KY's Shannon Thornsberry rounded out the top five. Delmas Conley, Robbie Lewis, Josh Bocook, Audie Swartz, and Billy Gullion completed the top 10.

The highlighted race of the night was the annual Cletus Classic in the R.W. Rental & Supply Modified Division. Pedro's Brian Skaggs was dominant leading all 20 laps en route to his second PRP win of the season. Nathan Loney, who set fast time in the Dynamic Shock Services Modified Time Trials, finished second. Jody Puckett, Ervin Vance, and Anthony Slusher rounded out the top five. Justin Jacobs, Austin Francis, Tim Tribby, Brandon Hutchinson, and Eddie Harmon made up the remainder of the top 10.

Slusher was named The Markwest Ranger Pipeline Hard Charger, as he advanced nine positions climbing from 14th to fifth.

Coal Grove's John Melvin returned to PRP Saturday night and wasted no time returning to his old form in the O'Reilly Auto Parts Limited Late Model Division. The nine-time PRP track champ made his first showing of the season and had no problems brushing off the rust. Melvin led every lap of the feature. Mike Meyers finished second. Shane Bailey, Cameron Logan, Billy Staker, Jacob Curnutte, Evyian Terry, Joe Whitt, Ronnie Whitt, and Jesse Lyons, Jr. made up the top 10.

The EMC2 Party Rentals and Inflatables Sport Mod Feature was a wild one. As has been the case in the first two races of the season, Brayden Berry took the win while Jason Spillman finished second, however, this past Saturday's race was nothing like the previous two.

Berry jumped out to the early lead, but received strong challenges from both Spillman and Zack Pendleton. As the matter of fact, Pendleton would pass Berry for the lead, but a caution came out before the lap was scored. The field reverted back to its running order from the previous lap prior to the ensuing restart.

Berry would later be passed by both Pendleton and Spillman, as the trio would go three-wide for the lead in turn 2. Pendleton would get by Berry up top, and Spillman would do the same on the bottom. Berry, however, would again be saved by a caution before that lap became official.

Pendleton got caught up in an accident late in the race and finished 14th. Berry held off Spillman to the finish. Derek Richmond, Luke Jordan, Alan Gulley, Brennan Bobst, Cody Gifford, Danny Hamilton, Jr., Joe McClain, and Stevie Thornsberry rounded out the top 10.

Portsmouth Raceway Park will return to action this coming Saturday for the annual running of The Boone Coleman Memorial "Gator 50". The Late Model winner will receive \$5,000 as well as providing a provisional starting spot in this October's Dirt Track World Championship, which is valued at \$2,000. Modifieds, Limited Lates, and Sport Mods will also be on this Saturday's card. Gates will open at 4 p.m. with racing at 7:30.

SATURDAY'S RESULTS

Late Model A-Main

1. 81-Brandon Fouts [1]; 2. 10C-Eddie Carrier Jr [2]; 3. 71C-RJ Conley [4]; 4. 21M-Jason Montgomery [3]; 5. 17-Shannon Thornsberry [6]; 6. 71-Delmas Conley [8]; 7. 48L-Robbie Lewis [9]; 8. B1-Josh Bocook [5]; 9. 1-Audie Swartz [7]; 10. 11G-Billy Gullion [10]; 11. 81A-Jeff Arnold Sr [12]; 12. 77A-Jeff Arnold [11]; 13. C97-Jackie Branham [14]; 14. 59-Chris McClain [15]; (DNS) 7J-Jeff Davis

Modified A-Main

1. 20S-Brian Skaggs [2]; 2. 10L-Nathon Loney [1]; 3. J3-Jody Puckett [3]; 4. P20-Ervin Vance [4]; 5. 2-Anthony Slusher [14]; 6. 20J-Justin Jacobs [5]; 7. 53-Austin Francis [10]; 8. 5-Tim Tribbey [12]; 9. A85-Brandon Hutchinson [15]; 10. 87-Eddie Harmon [17]; 11. 11-Gary Whitt [13]; 12. 35-Tony DeHart [11]; 13. 1J-Adam Colley [16]; 14. 26-Jason

Bilyeu [18]; 15. 7T-Tommy McClain [19]; 16. 11R-Jessie Rupe [8]; 17. 12R-Jeremy Rayburn [6]; 18. 55S-Jim Szekacs [20]; 19. 11S-Tyler Smith [7]; 20. B75-Brayden Berry [9]

Limited Late Model A-Main

1. 81-John Melvin [2]; 2. 10M-Mike Meyers [4]; 3. 1-Shane Bailey [1]; 4. 68-Cameron Logan [5]; 5. 7S-Billy Staker [3]; 6. 5C-Jacob Curnutte [6]; 7. 58-Evyian Terry [7]; 8. W1-Joe Whitt [9]; 9. 11-Ronnie Whitt [12]; 10. 17R-Jesse Lyons Jr [14]; 11. 97C-Kevin Terry [13]; 12. 94-Randy Ross [11]; 13. 73B-Austin Mullett [15]; 14. 81M-Matt Melvin [8]; 15. 48-Matt Cook [10]

Sport Mod A-Main

1. B75-Brayden Berry [2]; 2. 44-Jason Spillman [4]; 3. 34-Derek Richmond [5]; 4. 13J-Luke Jordan [9]; 5. 51G-Alan Gulley [12]; 6. 24B-Brennan Bobst [7]; 7. 88G-Cody Gifford [17]; 8. 99-Danny Hamilton Jr [13]; 9. 14-Joe McClain [15]; 10. 8D-Stevie Thornsberry [16]; 11. LJ5-LJ Moore [20]; 12. 2AKA-Kristin Butler [19]; 13. 12N-Rick Neace [8]; 14. 24Z-Zack Pendleton [3]; 15. B9-Jeremy Brady [6]; 16. 11B-Brandon Colley [11]; 17. 25S-Derek Spencer [1]; 18. 16-Mikey Howard [14]; 19. 99X-Dillon Hamilton [21]; 20. 19-Robert Lunsford [22]; 21. 13E-Emily Jordan [10]; 22. 11A-Sam Allen [18]; 23. 7J-Casey Jones [23]