

PRP Rinsed and Ready

By Chuck Greenslate

PRP Co-Promoter/Announcer

PORTSMOUTH – If you've ever had the chance to gaze over a lake, pond, creek, or river and see the sunlight dancing on the water as it ripples, most will agree you've been blessed to see an awful pretty picture. However, the site isn't too serene when it's in the infield of your racetrack and in the floor of your speedway's concession stand.

At Portsmouth Raceway Park, it's the site seen every spring when yearly flooding occurs.

Nobody can imagine the work that goes into getting the 19-year-old track ready to go after Mother Nature's annual baptism. Once the water recedes, a muddy residue is often left behind along with all kinds of tree limbs and other debris. There was even one year a fish was found in the catch fence.

PRP boasts some of the finest dirt-track facilities in the country. They ought to be good. Thanks to the Ohio and Scioto Rivers, everything at Portsmouth Raceway has to be scrubbed down each season.

There have been times when the water has unexpectedly come up so fast that concession stand equipment had to be dragged up the hill behind the speedway and onto The Carl Perkins Bridge.

Just weeks ago, the concession stand equipment was in place at the base of the three-story PRP press box but had to be relocated to the second floor when the water level began rising. By the time the Ohio River had crested, the water had gotten into the concession stand nearly two and a half feet deep, but you sure couldn't tell it today. The place looks brand new...just like it always does prior to a race weekend.

All the trash has been removed. Two men with weed-eaters have been mowing down grass for two straight days. The parking field has been mowed, and fresh gravel has been spread in the pits. The time is here!!!

Everyone at PRP hopes that the early May flooding will be the last until Spring 2010. We're ready to go racing, and this Sunday, Lord willing, we will.

Thanks to the efforts of track operator Tim Coleman and his assistants Junior Spillman and Dick Cook along with the help of many members from the Boone Coleman Construction Company, PRP will be ready to go for Sunday's running of the Big Red Book "Stars & Stripes 35".

It's hard to believe that the site for this May 24th race was at the bottom of the river less than two weeks ago.