

5-29-21: Fulton Speedway

My original plan for the weekend was to actually not go to any races on Saturday due to plans for two on Sunday and one on Monday. However, when the Sunday races looked sure to be rained out I had to change plans. My normal Saturday tracks are Bear Ridge or Seekonk, but Seekonk was running a thrill show and Bear Ridge only had a subset of their divisions running due to an enduro. It was one of those days to go to a track that I otherwise wouldn't necessarily have a reason to check out.

I decided to go to Fulton Speedway in New York since the Empire Super Sprints were going to be there. It's a 5 hour drive, which breaks my rule of max 4.5 hours one way in one day, but I decided it was worth it.

Pulling into the parking lot was a bit unusual because I could see nothing of the track at all. Turns out the parking lot is quite a bit higher than the track itself and the fence separating them is covered with a black screen so you can't see through. I bought my ticket, \$25 at the gate, and walked down the hill to the track. I always like tracks where the concourse is at the top since they tend to have better viewing angles and this seems to be no exception. There were grandstands all along the front stretch and into turn 4, where I sat. There were a number of people there but also plenty of open seats and I was able to get one in the top row. The grandstands themselves were very steep with the seats on the floor of the row behind, which is always a positive for me, it helps visibility so much. The top row is set forward enough to almost make a walkway behind, and in my case made a great place to stand up during the features. The hill up to the parking lot seemed like it would actually have pretty good views too and it was full of people in lawn chairs at the top.



The 360 sprint cars took to the track first for hot laps. It was really dusty right at the start of hot laps, to the point that I had to put my goggles on for the sprint cars and modifieds. I was worried that the dust would continue throughout the night, and though it was definitely dusty, it was much worse at the beginning. It seemed to be one of those tracks that needs to get blown off before it takes rubber and packs down.

The car counts were excellent, with 28 sprint cars, 30ish 358 modifieds, and 54 sportsman! There were also 12 Rush late models and a handful of novice sportsman. I was amazed by the 54 sportsman, that's a ridiculous number of cars for a weekly class. I'm sure all of the numbers were helped because most other tracks in the area rained out, but from talking to the guy sitting next to me I found out that it's common to have enough sportsman for two full features.

I was surprised to see late models there, as New York and New England in general really isn't late model country. I believe they're 602 crate motors so they didn't have a lot of power, but one of them had a real nice black and gold paint scheme.



I stood in a long line for food at a concession stand that seemed quite disorganized, but the chicken tenders were good. Heats started promptly at 7 and they kept it moving, always having the next race lined up in the chute ready to go right when the one before it ends. It took about 2 hours to run the heats but that was mostly due to the number of cars and the fact that there were 6 sportsman heats. There were some cautions but not terribly many.

They did a bit of track prep at intermission but it only lasted about 15 minutes. I collect packer truck pictures and they had a couple unique ones.



The track slicked up quite a bit throughout the heats and took a lot of rubber. It was much less dusty later in the evening than at the beginning which was welcome, but I was still covered by the end of the night.

The first feature was 25 laps for the Empire Super Sprints. Coming to the green one of the cars in the front of the pack popped a huge wheelie then slowed and collected multiple other cars. 4 or 5 cars were damaged but I'm surprised it wasn't bigger and that no one got upside down. It took a while to get everything sorted out and all the cars towed to the pits but they eventually got back going.

The first lap when all the cars were double file going into turn 1 I was unable to see the front stretch due to the dust they kicked up. Luckily it blew away pretty much by the time they got back around and after a few laps it wasn't an issue. The feature went caution free once they got going and it was good racing, the top really came in and made a multi-groove surface. One car was really pushing the top lane and making it work but I thought he was going to slam into the turn 4 wall every time he came around.

The sportsman came next and they ran dual features, with 26 cars in each. It's crazy how many showed up. There were no cautions in the first one and then two separate incidents coming to the checkered flag. The second was pretty clean too and both had solid racing.

The 358 feature started 31 cars even after running a consi. The track wasn't as wide for them as it was for the sprint cars, and most ran around the bottom, but there was another lane to work with that a few cars took advantage of. I'd love to see full-blown big blocks there, I think they'd be fun to experience.

I left after the modified feature because it was already 11pm and I had a 5 hour drive home, which is about the only reason to leave early if it's not freezing cold. I enjoyed the track quite a bit, 1/3 mile is a great size and the facility was set up to have very good sightlines. I wish it wasn't so far away.