

6-14-21: Wayne County Speedway

After Action Track last night I drove the six and a half hours to Wooster, Ohio where I got a nice Airbnb. I got in at 5am and slept until 9 then did a full day of work from home before heading to Wayne County Speedway for the All-Stars and night 3 of Ohio Speedweek.

The track was only 15 minutes from my Airbnb along nice country highways. I enjoy the drive in rural areas like that. I arrived and thought for a minute they might be out of parking because the track worker said he didn't know if there was any left, but there was plenty so I'm not sure what he was talking about. It does look like the lot fills up for big shows since a lot of the neighbors to the track had signs advertising \$5 parking on their property.

I got there about an hour after gates opened and not surprisingly all the top row seats were taken, but it seemed like most of the grandstands would have a solid view of the track so I settled somewhere a row or two down. As I'm wont to do, I wandered the length of the grandstands and scouted various locations and came across an open seat on the top row that was right next to a staircase leading up to the boxes at the top. If I stood on the bench (which I would have anyway) the staircase didn't get in the way of the view so I figured that was the place to be and moved my stuff there. It also happened to be right beneath where the All Star official on the radio to the drivers was standing so I got to hear what he was saying to them throughout the night and that was pretty cool.



I got a sloppy joe sandwich and fries for dinner. The fries were great, the sloppy joe not so much. I wandered through the merchandise trailers and should have bought a Tyler Courtney shirt, there were some pretty neat looking ones. He was my favorite USAC driver so I have to root for him in the All-Stars this year, though I'm still a bit sad he moved to wing racing as I miss seeing him in the USAC sprints and midgets.

There were 49 winged sprint cars, a huge field that was bigger than I was expecting. With car counts like that I considered staying another night in Ohio and skipping the Grandview race, but my Airbnb wasn't open another day so that wasn't an option. There were also 18 305 sprint cars on hand.

Jac Haudenschild was there in his throwback Pennzoil 22 car and it definitely looks nice. He's from Wooster so this seems to be his home track. I found out that another local champion in his final year was also there in a throwback scheme and they had both of them carrying the flag during the national anthem.



The All-Stars led off with qualifying where they did two cars at a time, something I'm not used to for sprint cars. They were using all the track on the exit of 4, it kept looking like they were going to hit the wall. Tyler Courtney got his first ever All-Stars quick time.

410 heat races were enjoyable with some good battles for the lead. One of the 305 cars lost a nose wing and it flew right over the turn 3 wall and out of the track, it was pretty funny. The All-Stars ran a C main and there was contact between two cars on the backstretch with one of them jumping a wheel and going sideways into the air, then digging in with the left sides and flipping multiple times. It was one of those wrecks that seemed like slow motion where you could see it was going to happen but it took a long time to materialize with the car hanging in the air.

The dashes were much more interesting than I'm used to. Jac Haudenschild pulled multiple slide jobs and went from 6th all the way up to 2nd in a very impressive run.



Then it was time for the A main. I watched as a car got into the guardrail in turn 2 and climbed right up and over, out of the park! The car wasn't visible once it came to rest behind the wall and the race continued green for another lap at least. People in the crowd were gesturing and yelling to throw the red and eventually the officials realized what had happened.



Justin Peck also went upside down, getting into the wall in 4 and tumbling and collecting Ian Madsen. Both cars would be repaired and come back. Peck's team didn't replace the wing, they just sort of hammered it back into the general shape it was supposed to be. I could see all the dents and deformations in it.

Tyler Courtney had an impressive run from 21st to 7th and Kyle Larson won, with Jac Haudenschild crossing the line in the top 5 after a spirited battle with multiple sliders in the final laps. He was clearly the hometown favorite and it was fun seeing the energy of the crowd whenever he made a pass.

I enjoyed the event quite a bit. The car counts were very impressive and I always like tracks that run right along the wall. It has a good amount of banking but is multi-groove and put on some good racing. I'll get to sleep tonight then head out in the morning after an 8am work meeting for the 7 hour drive to Grandview.