

## 2-12-23 New Smyrna Speedway

I knew I had to get to New Smyrna at some point in my road trip and it so happened that Sunday was the only day of the 12 on which only one track was racing, making it the obvious choice. I spent the morning checking out the Florida State Fair then drove out to the track. They do time trials then features only, and I don't feel the need to watch time trials for asphalt tracks, so I showed up a bit before their 7:30pm start time.

The track is right off the highway and I could hear the cars running as I was driving in. It seemed like parking might be an issue for the particularly crowded nights but wasn't an issue tonight. It wasn't particularly crowded, there was a solid number of people in attendance but there was plenty of seating available. I suppose it being Superbowl Sunday in addition to the Whelen Modified Tour racing last night could have contributed as well.



The top rows were reserved, it wasn't entirely clear what was and what wasn't, but it didn't seem to be much of an issue. The backstretch is largely obscured by the haulers parked in the infield, along with the bottom of turns two and three, and I don't believe even the top row would be able to avoid that issue.

I got dinner at the track and the concessions were quite slow, for no particular reason I could discern. I did appreciate the Jeff Gordon Pepsi car underneath the grandstands sitting there in front of the track championship banners.



Car counts were varied, with a strong 33 602 modifieds, 29 pro late models, and 21 super late models, and dropped to 15 for the Bomber As and 13 for the Florida modifieds.

The super late models went green to checkered in their feature and had some decent side by side racing. The track has a good bit of banking making it pretty bottom dominant but with how it narrows on corner exit it allows the top to pinch the bottom down and can offer some two wide racing. There was a good pass for the lead where second place moved the leader up the track to take the position.



The Bomber A class ran a makeup feature from a previously rained out one. They were four cylinders, and A as opposed to B which were another version of four cylinder cars. They had a lot of contact on the first lap, going three wide multiple times, before getting spread out. The restarts had good racing as well, fanning out down the front stretch. One even got down into the grass entering turn one and just held on to it. The officials did hold someone for two laps for intentionally bringing out the yellow.

The Florida modifieds got spread out quickly, there were a couple spins but nothing particularly interesting. The Florida modified is of the style I'm familiar with as a PASS modified, the style with a thin tire, full windshield, and body style that looked mostly like a chopped off late model. I've never been much of a fan of their racing for some reason, though maybe car counts are a big part of that.

The 602 modified race got pretty wild pretty quickly. There was a pileup on the backstretch with multiple cars getting sideways and spinning, and one that got turned down the track and got the back end up into the inside catch fence. He tore down I think 7 fence poles, a surprisingly large number. I wouldn't have expected that many to come down and it makes me wonder about the safety for the infield fans if that many can be broken, and I wonder how well the fence would have held the car in the track if it was high enough up to go over the wall.

They resumed the race in only about 15 minutes, way too little time to have actually replaced the fence poles. I couldn't really see for sure because of the lack of visibility there, but I know from the Gateway Dirt Nationals that they take about 20 minutes to replace a single post, so there's no way they fixed them all. I guess they were fine with running without them there for the final race of the night.

The race was a good one, ending in a dead heat at the line on the final green-white-checkered, with a margin of victory of 0.001 seconds!