

9-01-24 Angell Park Speedway

The most exciting thing I realized after booking my trip to Milwaukee was that the USAC National Midgets were going to be running only an hour away from the track and the IndyCar schedule was such that I would be able to see almost the entire show. Had I realized this before booking my flights (or realized that it was a three day weekend in the first place) I would have stuck around for the second day too, but I was happy to get at least the one.

IndyCar finished a little after 5pm and we hurried out of the stands and got out without any traffic, making the hour-long drive to Sun Prairie. The track is right in the middle of town, nestled between a fancy-looking high school and a cemetery. There were rolling grass hills for a parking lot and plenty of space. When we arrived there was no line to get tickets and we managed to get there quick enough to only miss about half the hot laps. I was glad to make it for all of qualifying as I really do enjoy time trials for sprints and midgets on dirt.



The track is set up with stands going down the hill on the front stretch with only the top couple of rows being built-up grandstands. Stands go around through turn one and these are taller and also elevated up from the ground. Everywhere seems to offer good views, the only issue being the big building in the middle of one and two that blocks part of the track if you're too close to it. Otherwise the views from everywhere seemed to be great, there's nothing in the infield to obstruct views and everything is built up from the track and offered great sightlines. The front stands are kind of shallow and may have an issue with people sitting right in front, though I didn't test this.



The stands were quite full when we got there 20 minutes after the start of hot laps. The front stretch stands seemed completely packed except for the bottom 5 rows or so. I soon discovered that was the splash zone and the cars sent quite a bit of high-velocity dirt into you when sitting there, but they soon filled up as well. The turn one stands where we ended up sitting weren't nearly as full but still had a good crowd.



I noticed the commentators were situated on a raised platform at the entrance of turn 1, completely open. There was no box or anything they were within and seemingly no box for race control either, unless they were in the building in one and two. The USAC commentator even mentioned how he's not used to being hit with dirt while calling races.

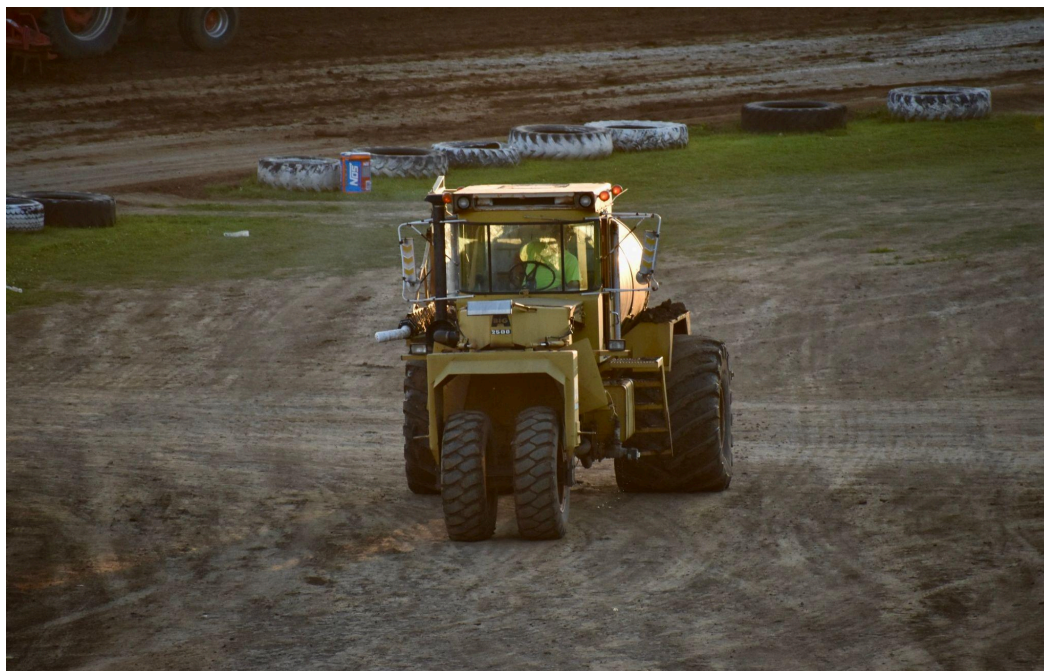
The track is quite circular, wide radius turns with short straights resulting in cars that are rarely not turning. It was pretty flat and very wide, especially down the front stretch. I could hear the PA clearly when the cars were pacing but not so much at speed.

There were long lines for concessions so I didn't partake in them, but I did appreciate the "Redneck Sundae" that was offered, featuring "BBQ pulled pork, mac n cheese, more pork, coleslaw, and a pickle spear".

24 USAC National Midgets and 27 Badger midgets signed in for possibly the first midget-only show I've ever been to now that I think about it. They pushed off qualifying from the infield, with the push truck making half a lap around the inside of the track and pulling back into the infield. There were a lot of different lines entering one and a bouncy track, some pretty big bounces, and a couple wheelstands exiting two.

They rolled the top then ran badger midgets, which ran all over the track, no clearly defined racing line that I could see. They got a little more strung out as the races went on. They did cone restarts but at least put the cone well before the start/finish line. There's clearly some lore behind it since the announcer said "the cone is named Derek and I don't know why but they insist that I call it that".

The USAC heats were decent, mostly running the cushion but a few on the bottom. There was one big bike but he kept it going. The cushion seemed tricky but it didn't bite anyone. Jade Avedisian made a great move to go third to first in the first corner and ran away with her heat, setting a new 8-lap track record.



The badgers ran an LCQ then they did pretty major track prep, turning over most of it and rolling it in. The badger midgets apparently only start 22 cars and they got their feature underway at 7:45pm. There were a lot of battles and multiple lines throughout, nothing crazy but consistently good racing. Coming to the checkered flag one car did have a pretty violent flip against the front stretch wall. The winner came from 16th in an excellent run through the field.



The USAC feature took the green at 8:45pm, crazy early for what I expected. The track was still tricky - the cars didn't seem to want to settle into it well and they were all bouncing around. There was some dust but not bad, exacerbated by the wind blowing right in my face, but I never had to put goggles on.

It was good racing and clean throughout, minimal cautions. It was a two groove track and had some interesting lines, with a couple cars severely diamonding turn two in particular. As the sun set there was a great view of the sunset over the trees behind the track.



I liked the sightlines and the facility, it had character especially being right in the middle of the town and right next to the high school. I always love watching midgets and they put on a show here, I would happily come back in the future. The fact that we left by a little after 8:30pm was also appreciated given we had a two hour drive and a 6am flight in the morning.