

2-10-23: Auburndale Speedway and Showtime Speedway

As happens frequently in Florida, rain played a factor in which races I went to this Friday night. I had originally planned to go to All-Tech on Saturday for the big block modifieds but when that looked like it would be a rainout, I switched to Friday to try to count that track then. Unfortunately, about 45 minutes down the road while calling my brother and having him give me radar updates, the show ended up getting canceled. I turned around and headed south instead, stopping at a nice disc golf course on the way and getting nine holes in before heading to Auburndale Speedway.



Auburndale is a paved, low-banked quarter mile. I got there about half an hour before heats were scheduled to begin and it was almost entirely empty. I wandered around while the single care time trials were going on for the bandoleros and legends. I did appreciate that the times were put on the scoreboard each lap.



The main grandstands were aluminum that flexed a disconcertingly large amount under my foot as I climbed up. The views were solid all throughout, and apparently NASCAR driver Jimmy Spencer once sat in them.



The car counts were very low, with 6 bandoleros, 10 legends, 9 crown vics, and 5 mini stocks. The headlining class, a non-points show for the USAC Eastern Midgets, did have 15 which was more than I had actually expected, and I was not expecting them to be running with wings. I think the only other place I've seen winged midgets is with NEMA in New England. Judging from my stopwatch, it seemed like the slow midgets were pretty close in lap time to the fastest legend cars.

Several New England racers that I recognized mainly from NEMA had made the trip down to race which was kind of cool. They split the 15 into three heats and the racing was alright, but they did spread out quite a bit. The crown vics put on the best show in heat racing, which isn't surprising as street stocks generally have the ability to be exciting kind of wherever they race.

I left after heat racing finished to head to the second track of the night. The timing worked out nicely, with Showtime Speedway not even starting their show until 7:30. I got there about an hour after that, not long after feature events began.

Showtime is in the outskirts of Tampa Bay in the middle of a big industrial park. It wasn't terribly easy to figure out how to get inside, and I made a wrong turn on the way in and ended up in the pit area without going through any sort of gate or anything. Eventually I found the parking lot, which was located across a seemingly abandoned drag strip.



The track is another paved quarter mile, very similar in shape and apparently a sister track to Auburndale. Sightlines were great, I was actually pretty satisfied with them even standing on the ground before finding my way to a seat since there's really nothing to obstruct your vision.

I got inside while the mini stock feature was underway. There was a decent crowd but it was far from full and I found a nice spot on the top row in turn 4. The racing was pretty competitive and they were three wide for a full lap at one point.

The crown vics, of which there were 22 here, put on a great show when they were actually racing. They had real struggles with lining them back up after a caution, having to stop them multiple times and the flagman in turn 4 went out to talk to several cars each time. That flagman also had no headset on and was having to yell back and forth with other officials outside the track, then relay this info the drivers who must not have had raceceivers, and the whole thing was really tedious and poorly managed.

When they were racing it was fun though. There was always two wide action and three wide sometimes and it was pretty fun. The street stocks ran afterward, which was apparently a local street stock vs. CRA street stock race. The CRA cars had a lot of power, way more than I'd expect in a street stock just judging by their sound.

Finally, the exciting part was that they ran a figure-8 dash at the end of the night. When the schedule originally came out, figure-8s were only listed as practice so it wasn't a priority for me to visit, but getting two in one is always great.

The announcer said that they ran in the "opposite direction, a first for us." I was surprised they ran that way just due to how the holes in the outer wall were positioned but apparently they deemed it safe enough. They also had a different flagstand that the flagman went over to for their race.



It was outlaw figure-8s and they had a lot of interesting bodywork and various sailpanels and wings in different configurations. Those cars are quite quick and it would be fun to see a long race with a lot of them on track. The dash was only 12 laps so the racing wasn't particularly interesting, but it was enough to count the track and get me to three for the day, quite an accomplishment after a rainout earlier in the afternoon.