

7-15-23: NHMX Flat Track

After buying my mini sprint a couple months ago and getting it ready to race, I proceeded to get rained out four races in a row. In order to just get some laps in I decided to go up to the flat track at New Hampshire Motocross Park for their Saturday night racing. It's primarily a motocross and ATV track, about a fifth mile and almost entirely flat.



We arrived and found a spot to park, one of the last in the main pit area. Anyone coming later had to park down at the bottom of the hill. We unloaded the car and tried to figure out how everything worked since I've never driven this car before or been to this track before.



It was a standard hot laps, heat, and feature format, with about 18 different classes ranging from kids motorcycles to pro bikes and ATVs. It did seem like safety standards weren't enforced, there were people riding motorcycles that only had a t-shirt and shorts on below their chest and shoulder pads. No way I'd want to be on a bike with that little gear but apparently that was fine here.

I didn't know if any other micro sprints would show up since it doesn't seem like they get many of them. I was happy to see one other car in the pits, since that would make it a countable race in addition to just giving me track time in my new car. The other car was kind of janky, clearly a homebuilt car. The driver didn't even wear a firesuit and had a short sleeve shirt on while driving.

They did an interesting thing with the track where they put tires out to force the cars to the top of the track for hot laps, quite high up. They said they'd move them down some for heats then move them all the way in for features, as a way to keep the track fresh without doing any prep.

I got strapped into my car and drove down the hill and around the track to enter on the backstretch for hot laps. I got there and turned the car off while waiting for our turn, but when I went to drive out on the track I wasn't able to get the car started for some reason. My brother ran up and got me turned around and I was able to pop the clutch and start it on the downhill to drive back to the pits.



Coming out for heats later on I needed to bump start it down the hill and just kept it idling to make sure I'd be able to go. It was so amazing to be able to drive my car finally. The track was exceedingly slick, and people who are regulars here also said that it was abnormally slick. It was hard to keep the car down on the exit of the turns but I never felt like I was going to hit anything so that's a good sign. I followed the other car for most of it but at some point I realized I had so much more speed than him and decided I was going to make the pass when I saw the white flag, and when I floored it on the exit of four I was able to pull almost half a straightaway on him and make the pass going into turn one.



The whole show took quite a while with a lot of downtime beyond just the time required to run so many different classes. It was pretty late by the time I got to go out for the feature. I started on the outside and was pretty easily able to pull away in the lead, since my car just had a lot more power. I was looking at it as a practice session so I tried to push the car as much as I could, seeing how sideways I could enter the corner and how late I could brake and still make a good entrance. It was so slick that I kept almost spinning exiting the turns, there was just no bite with the right rear to lean on at all. I did eventually spin on the final lap entering turn three and stalled the car, so I lost even though I had a three quarter of a lap lead, but I didn't care, it was just good to get laps.

My brother ran out on track and pushed me off the track then the other car came and gave me a push to bump start me to get up the hill back to the pits. It was awesome to get to drive my car finally, and counting a new track that would be hard to count if I tried was an added bonus.