

## 7-05-23: Independence Motor Speedway

I was a bit surprised how few options there were for races in the day surrounding the Fourth of July but I was able to locate Independence, conveniently within a couple hours of What Cheer where I was last night. I worked most of the day from the hotel and finished the day from a coffee shop before heading to the track.

I arrived what ended up being an hour before the gates opened, though they never published anywhere when gates would actually open. It was a fairgrounds track and the county fair was happening so I got myself a real nice ribeye sandwich from the beef association booth then listened to the other people in line complaining about the \$5 fair admission they had to pay in addition to the \$15 track admission, apparently that was a new thing.



When they eventually opened gates I got a nice seat in the top row. There were nice and steep aluminum grandstands offering good views. There were still top row seats available even 30 minutes or so before hot laps but the stands filled in pretty good as hot laps were starting. There was a decent variety of concessions and I had some pretty good fried cheese curds.



The pit area was off behind three and four and there were fields in the background. The pits were big enough for a bunch more cars and they said they had over 150 cars for their show on Monday. The track had some banking with no walls directly on it and plenty of runoff area over the banking. There was a big concert stage in the middle but it really was only a couple poles that blocked the track and I didn't really notice it luckily.







Car counts were solid overall, pretty light on the sport mods with 11 but a strong 25 modifieds were the highest count, with 15-18 of each of the hobby stocks, stock cars, late models, and sport compacts, all IMCA sanctioned. They were all over the track in hot laps, with the modifieds in particular running pretty high up on the track right off the bat. It seemed as though they hot lapped only one session per division as consequently got through all the divisions in about 15 minutes.

The stock cars started the heat racing. The unique incident in one of their heats was when a car spun in four and backed into infield tractor tire, climbing on top of it with the back end of the car. During the ensuing caution, the tractor came out and knocked down the cushion in three and four and I don't think I've ever seen mid race track prep anywhere else before.



The track started slicking off quickly once the modifieds started racing. They were mostly on the top of the track but spread out pretty quickly. It was multiple groove for almost all divisions which I always like to see, and they kept the show moving well. No excessive pace laps, everyone was staged and ready to go as soon as the previous heat ended. They even started rolling out the next heat as the last place car in the current heat was rolling across the finish line. Heats took about an hour, ending at 8:10.

They did a full till of the track, but didn't touch the cushion, and that took about 30 minutes then they were ready to start features.

I'd forgotten about the weird Iowa thing of running features with laps equal to the car count, so it was 16 laps for the 16 hobby stocks and 15 for the sport compacts, though the bigger classes ran standard 20 lap features.

The hobby stock main was one of the best races of the night. There was a good battle for the lead at the end with cars on the top and bottom throughout the race. One went over the edge in one and drove straight into the guardrail, hitting it hard with the side and bouncing pretty good.

The modified feature went caution free after an opening lap wreck. The track was fully bluegrooved by the end but it had a top and bottom line and the cushion was big enough to catch cars as they slid up into it.

The big race of the night was for the late models, but it wasn't a particularly interesting race. The modifieds and sport mods could run the top but the late models couldn't at all, being single file on the bottom pretty much the whole race.

Some of the crowd has left after the modified main and half the remaining crowd left now, leaving only a small portion left for the sport compact feature. The sport compacts put on a much better show than the late models though, racing all over the track as only front wheel drive cars can do. One of them was lifting up the left rear wheel almost the tire lap

