



Chicago, October 7, 2009, NASA Midwest, Inc.

Putnam Park Road Course/October 2-4, 2009/NASA Great Lakes-Midwest Crossover Event

944 Spec Wraps up 2009

NASA Midwest's final weekend for 2009 turned out to be as much fun as many of the 944 Spec gang can remember. With exciting racing, a close championship points battle, car swaps, and good conditions that resulted in demolished track records - much fun & excitement abounded. This final race weekend was especially anticipated, as the season championship was going to be decided. With 10 points separating Eric Kuhns & Andy Berberich, the Regional Championship was up for grabs. Adding to the intrigue was the fact that Putnam was the track that Kuhns had crashed at this spring, and a recently resurgent Ray Freundt was known to be fast at this track.

With cool conditions, no rain, and a return to the trusty RA-1, times were fast from the start, with several drivers running at or under lap record times, including series newcomer Neil Agran in the Bennington Motorsports rental car. Saturday qualifying was interrupted almost immediately from fluid on the track from a Spec Miata, causing a black flag. With little time remaining after the restart, the session went green from the first lap. Not realizing this, much of the field scrubbed their tires anyway before taking a hot lap. Despite having only a few laps to get a time, the top 3 cars were each only 1/10th apart each - Kuhns, Freundt & then Berberich respectively - meaning the race for the championship was going to be close! Kuhns & Freundt were surprised to find that they were penalized for scrubbing tires under green during practice. Kuhns was able to get this overturned with his own in-car video, leaving the grid for the big race Kuhns, Berberich, Blazquez, Agran, and Freundt, respectively.

When the green flag dropped on this most anticipated race, Kuhns got a small, but important jump on Berberich. The 1/3 car length he gained kept Berberich from getting completely around Kuhns down the straight. Kuhns went deep into turn one, braking at the 100 foot marker, and was able to get back by Berberich into turn 2. Berberich pressured Kuhns for the next several laps, with Kuhns being slightly faster on the backside, and Berberich gaining a bit back coming out of 10 and down the main straight. Through traffic, Kuhns was able to gap Berberich by a few car-lengths as the race progressed, setting a new lap record in the progress. The most exciting drive of the day, however, was that of Freundt, who worked his way from the back of the grid through the field, past Berberich,



**nasa**  
NATIONAL AUTO SPORT ASSOCIATION

NASA Midwest Inc.  
5250 Grand Avenue  
Suite 14-387  
Gurnee, IL 60031

and passing Kuhns late in the race by skillfully reading traffic, and maximizing opportunity. This same traffic allowed Berberich an opportunity to catch up, and the championship battle was again on the line with only a couple of laps to go!

Kuhns was finally able to get back by Freundt on the last lap when Freundt ran a bit wide and went 2 off in turn 4, handing Kuhns the win, and enough points to lock up the Regional Championship. Pushing hard, Blazquez went off in turn 9 late in the race, neatly slotting in between a tire wall, and a small tree, as if he had executed a high speed parallel parking maneuver, and escaped with car & driver unscathed, but allowed Agran to take 4th place.

With the championship points decided, the second race Saturday started a bit lower key, but turned out to be quite exciting racing as well. The grid was set the same as race one due to the tight schedule. This time it was Berberich that got the slight jump at the start, allowing him to motor by Kuhns and pull into the inside line before turn one. Freundt, however, was once again on fire, and wasted no time moving from the back of the grid to the front. It was all Berberich & Kuhns could do keep up with Freundt. Each driver had to battle a very aggressively driven Mustang (that we saw the side of as much as the rear), before we made it by, one by one. Freundt was not to be denied this race, and dominated this race from the back of the grid to win his second race of the season. Kuhns managed to get by Berberich on the penultimate lap, before leaving the door open inside going into turn one, and giving the place back, leaving Kuhns in third at the finish. Blazquez & Agran had a good scrap to finish their race, as well, but everyone kept it clean, and had a good race.

The regular season over, the drivers were treated to a spectacular year-end banquet Saturday night by NASA, with a live band, and really great food & drink to complement all the banter about this last exciting year, and some good natured trash talking about next year. At the banquet, each driver received a personalized poster with pro photos of their car from Time Stilling Photography, sponsored by Nick Miller of Bennington Motorsports. Recounting the season, all drivers were very thankful to have had the affordable & highly skilled trackside support of Bennington. The best measure of their success was that out of 90 possible race starts, 944 Spec drivers were able to make 89, an enviable percentage in any situation. This also speaks to the quality and durability of the cars and drivers of 944 Spec, as no cars were taken out of commission by contact, despite frequently rainy conditions this year. Road America was a Monsoon! Kuhns' flip over his nose onto his roof at Putnam this spring certainly added a bit of unintended drama to the season, but with a little luck, and a lot of help from friends, family, and sponsors, was able to come back, and rise through the points to complete a "flip and win" season!



Sunday was purely for fun and the 944 Spec gang swapped cars with the Camaro-Mustang Challenge guys for a one lap shootout. A whole lot of fun was had by all, but in the end the 944 Spec guys went down by 0.7 seconds, and owe the guys with the mullets a case of Pabst! Apparently jumping in a Firechicken cold and going fast is a bit harder than a 944. Still, we'd do it all gain next year in a heartbeat!

With good turnouts this year, 944 Spec Qualified for year end Toyo Bucks, bringing the yearly total to \$6000!

Thanks to our sponsors:

Bennington Motorsports - [www.BENMS.com](http://www.BENMS.com). Let them help you with your 944 Spec build - with affordable service from individual parts & preparation, to complete 944 Spec builds.

A Part Above - [www.APartAbove.com](http://www.APartAbove.com). Your 944 used parts source.

Toyo Tires [www.Toyo.com](http://www.Toyo.com).

Ekquist Racing Trailers - [www.ekquistracing-trailers.com](http://www.ekquistracing-trailers.com)

NASA - [www.NASAproracing.com](http://www.NASAproracing.com)

Eric Kuhns  
# 80 944 Spec  
944 Spec Midwest Director

Contact:  
Bryan Cohn  
Director of Competition  
NASA Midwest, Inc.  
[bcohn@nasamidwest.com](mailto:bcohn@nasamidwest.com)  
316 452 5033 Office  
316 251 5109 Mobile