



Gurnee, IL - July 28th, 2011, NASA Great Lakes.

For complete results and lap records, please see www.nasagreatlakes.com
www.nasamidwest.com.

Spec Miata action arrived in full force at the July 16&17,2011 NASA race at Mid-Ohio. The racing was hot, but the temperatures were hotter, well into the 90s. The racing was as close as it has been in years. A field of 30 Miatas took to qualifying, yielding a grid that was separated by less than six tenths of second from pole to 12th position, in fact less three tenths separated 3rd from 12th!

TJ Graven in the #22 car took his first pole position and led the field out on Saturday. Unfortunately, circumstances lead to a jumped start by many in the field. At least six drivers started on the first wave's green and led to one of the more congested first corners in recent memory. After the confusion gave way to single file order, Justin Hille in the #175 car continued his winning ways by taking the overall victory.

TJ Graven performed nicely, claiming 2nd place and holding off a persistent Brian Murdick in the #17 who completed the podium. Hille was quick, but did not manage the fastest lap of the race, that honor went to Greg Stasiowski who finished in 6th place, but clicked off a 1:44.112 in the process. John Guthrie claimed 4th while, Dan Fargo driving the #47 Team Tedlar car finished 5th. A three car battle that was particularly heated, but clean, involved the #3 car of Chris Price, #28 of Bill Biel, and the # 35 car of Frank Todaro. Their four or five lap battle involved several pass and repasses, leading to a 7th place finish for Price as Biel and Todaro were penalized for jumping the start. Saturday's race was relatively clean with only one real incident occurring when the # 07 of Jon Lawrence came together with the #8 of Kevin Gleason.

Great Lakes Spec Miata welcomed two new Spec Miata drivers this weekend, Mike Metzler drove the blue #75 car to 18th place in his first competition race, welcome on board Mike! Nick DeCuzzi, while a veteran NASA racer, piloted his first Spec Miata in a NASA race, finishing 20th overall. Nice work by Nick, considering he was still adjusting ride height, camber, and fixing electrical issues just hours before the race! Finally, hard charger award went to John Green in the #027, who climbed from 25th to 12th during the 35 minute sprint.

Ultimately, seven cars were penalized for jumping the start, and a few were docked for missing NASA stickers, or missing the driver's meeting! Take note drivers, have your stickers on the car, and don't miss any driver's meetings!

Sunday dawned with a heavy blanket of fog covering the track. Practice was cancelled, and qualifying was the first time the driver's would see the track. 27 cars took the qualifying green, and times were again extremely close with less than .7 seconds separating pole position from 9th. Justin Hille gained pole and would lead 27 Miatas to the green on Sunday.

The race started much cleaner than Saturday with everyone on the same starting page, as the cars sped through the kink, Justin Hille and Kyle Webb came together, resulting in a trip down the left side of the track for Hille. Hille's car spun at least five times just feet from the concrete barrier before coming to rest as the entire field sped by.



John Guthrie in the #21 car grabbed the lead in the fracas and steadfastly defended the position to finish first. Kyle Webb #61, Chris Price #3, Dan Fargo, Brian Murdick, Greg Stasiowski #32, Jay North #113 and Chris Williams #55 all formed a very tight front pack that nipped at the heels of Guthrie. The pack started thinning out with a spin by Webb, followed with a spin by North that collected Murdick. The surviving drivers continued the chase with Guthrie holding on watching Spencer, Stasiowski, Price, Williams, and Fargo continue to hound him for position. As the white flag flew, Guthrie held the lead with Spencer, Webb (who had charged back from the earlier spin), and Stasiowski fighting him for the lead. Just a second back, Williams running in fifth was just beginning to be hounded by none other than Justin Hille who had re-fired his motor after his first lap adventure and passed 21 cars to find himself in sixth on the last lap!

Turn one would prove to be the last decision point for the race. Webb running in second tried to put a move on Gurthrie a little early in turn one and came around, Stasiowski running in third made a great bailout effort to avoid the spinning Webb, driving off the right side of the exit of turn one, although he was hit in the door, Stasiowski managed to make a mad, car bouncing dash through the infield and rejoined the pack, but not after Spencer, Williams, and Hille had motored into 2nd, 3rd and 4th respectively. That was how the pack would end with Guthrie taking a hard fought win, Spencer 2nd, Williams 3rd, Hille an incredible comeback 4th, and Stasiowski in 5th. They were followed by Fargo, Matt Paderta in the #23 car who made a nice charge to finish 7th, the #60 of Rick Deerwester who also improved seven spots to finish 8th, Todaro, and Graven finished out the top ten. Zacahary Silver in the #62 car finished 11th, nice run for the youngest driver in the field at the age of 15! The official hard charger award goes to Frank Todaro for improving eight spots in the race. However the spirit of the hard charger has to go to Hille who passed 23 cars to finish in fourth, even though qualified on pole. Hille also posted the fastest lap of the race at a 1:44.083.

Hille continued to put a stranglehold on first place in the points chase, gaining ground over Williams in second and Fargo in third, Hille is just about a mathematical lock, with the ability to close out first place in August with one or two wins.

Most the entire field is already registered for the August event, it should prove to be even more interesting in August, as we are just one event away from the National Championships!

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