



nasa
NATIONAL AUTO SPORT ASSOCIATION

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

Chicago, April 18, 2011, NASA Midwest, Inc.

GTS Kicks off the 2011 Great Lakes Season

GTS Great Lakes racing for 2011 kicked off Saturday April 9 at Mid-Ohio. After a winter of no racing and rain all day Friday (while some brave souls practiced), the track was about as green as it could have been and lap times suffered accordingly.

With Nationals coming back to Mid-Ohio this year, we're already seeing visitors from other regions coming to learn the track in preparation for an assault here in September. Between that and, I suppose, enough people stir crazy after a winter of no driving, the groups were packed, with 60 cars in Lightning and 63 in Thunder. Because of the number of cars, qualifying for the two run groups was split into three sessions with all of GTS plus Spec E30 and Spec 944 all joined as a mixed race group qualifying session. All the German cars at once, which seemed to be OK with everyone concerned.

The Club course was used for what almost certainly will be the only time this season.

GTS1

More than any other class, GTS1 saw the results of a lot of winter work on display. John Graber, Paul Milligan and Brant Giere all boasted new wings and splitters. Graber's car also sported canards, partial side windows, side skirts and a new slippery nose. Ed Baus's green and silver "Polizei" Porsche 944 was nicknamed "the Transformer" for the amazing range of new aero gear attached thereto including side skirts, radical canards, carbon fiber hood vents, wind deflectors at the leading edge of the front windows, and fore/aft NASCAR-ish air-guidance "fins" across the roof.

Perhaps the most radical of the winter's results were found on Mike Mallais' shockingly green 944. Mallais widened his car (again!) and made a thousand little changes including moving the driver's position rearward for better weight balance. Greg Panik's car showed off vortex generators at the back of the roof, a new splitter, and what may be the most perfectly-detailed motor I've ever seen in a race car.

Qualifying Saturday had Graber in front with a 1:45.020, seven-tenths ahead of Baus (1:45.788) and a little over two seconds in front of Milligan (1:47.434) who was followed by Giere, JP Verbunt and Greg Panik.

In the race, Mallais was quick early, turning a best-of-race lap of 1:43.650



nasa
NATIONAL AUTO SPORT ASSOCIATION

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

(reported incorrectly as a track record) and moving up three in-class places in the first four laps but then he was forced to retire with car teething problems. Meanwhile, Graber, Baus and Milligan ran in that order for six laps until Graber somehow broke a fuel rail and had to retire. On that same lap, Milligan moved past Baus to take the lead once and for all, ultimately winning with a 5.4 second margin over Baus, followed by Giere, Panik and Verbunt, in that order.

Sunday's qualifying was done in drying conditions. Milligan won that battle with a best of 2:02.654 followed by Graber (2:03.556) and Baus a bit further back with a 2:07.031. The rest of the GTS1 crowd skipped Sunday's early qualifying session.

In the race, it was all Graber and Milligan, literally running away from the field but staying close to one another until Graber and a Spec Miata had an argument about who owned a particular piece of the track, the result of which let Milligan get away. Baus had LSD problems which were followed, about halfway through the race, by a front wheel bearing going bad on him. Baus, Graber and Giere all share a common radio frequency so they can talk while they're racing but with Giere rapidly closing on Ed's wounded car, Ed maintained radio silence about his problems choosing, instead, to continually ask "how much time is leftt?"

At the end, Milligan won with a 19.226 second margin over Graber who, in turn, was another 9.4 seconds ahead of Baus but at least managed to set the GTS1 fast lap of the race. Giere was fourth, three seconds behind Baus but at the end of the race he was closing the gap enough that another few laps may have ended with a different result. Panik brought up the rear, with Verbunt and Mallais both non-starters.

GTS2

GTS2, typically one of our biggest car-count classes was this weekend the class with the fewest, with a field of only three making the bell: Mike Ward, Enzo Campagnolo and Breck Lewis. Most of the rest of the usual suspects were out for a variety of reasons (I promised not to use the word "excuses") but are all threatening to be back at Putnam Park in May.

From the start it promised to be a weekend of close racing between the red cars of Campagnolo and Ward and the reality did not disappoint. In Saturday's qualifying, Ward led the class with a 1:44.390, followed closely by Campagnolo (1:44.997) and Lewis. From the green flag, Ward and Campagnolo ran nose-to-tail with Ward in the lead until Enzo found a way around at the end of the back straight on the sixth lap, a lead which would last for exactly four and a half turns until he over-cooked the turn into Thunder Valley and nearly (or maybe BARELY) tagged the wall. Great video of their race up until (and including) that moment is here: <http://www.vimeo.com/22266805>



nasa
NATIONAL AUTO SPORT ASSOCIATION

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

Saturdays' race ended with Ward enjoying a comfortable 27-second lead over Campagnolo, followed by Lewis.

Sunday started out as a carbon-copy of Saturday ("carbon copies" are an old-school pre-Xerox technology for you kids. Oh, and "Xerox" is an old-school name of a company which used to be synonymous with "copier." A copier was a device we used back in the Stone Age before everybody scanned documents and...oh, forget it. Google it if you want to know, or Friend it on Facebook...).

But I digress.

Ward and Campagnolo were right back at it Sunday running nose to tail, dogging one another, and running right behind GTS3 and GTS4 cars who couldn't manage to open up much ground on them. Their race was amazingly close but somewhere along the way Campagnolo made a pass under yellow (there were a lot of them this weekend) which resulted in his being disqualified from the race. Ward won their battle outright and set the class fastest-lap with a 1:41.836 while Lewis inherited second.

GTS3

I mentioned that we had some out-of-region visitors last weekend and the first of those was Joshua Smith from the Mid-Atlantic region in his silver E46 M3. Josh was completely new to Mid-Ohio, having never turned a wheel here until Saturday morning in slippery conditions but that didn't stop him from qualifying at the front of GTS3 with 1.5 seconds in hand over Korey Deason who was followed in turn by Christian Maloof, Kevin Ogrodnik and Paul Davison. Jim Stevens was moved to the rear of the class after skipping impound after misinterpreting a marshall's hand signals.

Early on in the race Smith, Deason and Maloof ran closely together in that order until Deason got stymied by traffic, letting Maloof past and into second. Maloof made a good effort but newcomer Smith made himself entirely unwelcomed by winning his first-ever Mid-Ohio race by 4.311 seconds over Maloof, followed another four seconds back by Deason, then Ogrodnik just a second behind Deason. Stevens and Davison rounded out the class.

On Sunday, qualifying was early with a still-damp-but-drying track. Although rain tires seemed like the right choice early, the REAL right choice was slicks...and patience. Deason came equipped with both and in the last two laps of the qualifying session went from mid-pack to overall GTS pole with a 1:58.773 which would be slow in other conditions but was nearly four seconds faster than second-place-in-GTS3 Stevens who was followed by Ogrodnik, Smith, Maloof



nasa
NATIONAL AUTO SPORT ASSOCIATION

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

and Davison, in that order.

In the race, Smith made it up to Deason's rear bumper after the first couple of turns and then found a way past as they negotiated traffic. However, Deason wasn't ready to just give it up without a fight and eventually made it back past into the lead after a yellow-flag restart. He managed to fight off a determined Smith through the end of the race and in the end Deason won over Smith with a 6.482 second margin. Maloof was third, followed by Ogrodnik, Stevens and Davison.

GTS4

Our other out-of-region visitor last weekend was Max Fisher in his wildly-wrapped M3, a graphics scheme so outrageous it rivaled even Jamie Frauenberg's crazy blue-camouflage wrap for Best of Show. Max said, "Josh and I showed up with our E46 M3s, to get some seat time at Mid Ohio, and get a feel for the competition. We anticipated a great event, well-prepared cars and quality drivers, and we got it all. NASA Great Lakes runs a tight ship, and that's crucial to a successful weekend. We were also welcomed by everyone, and even our direct competitors were willing to share secret intel regarding the track."

"The infamous Mid-Ohio weather didn't let us down, either. Friday's test day was a real education, as were Saturday and Sunday morning. Man that sealer is like ice! But once the track dried out, we started to feel the rhythm of the line, and it was a blast.... We can't wait to get back out to Mid-Ohio and the NASA Great Lakes, it's worth the trip!"

With six cars, GTS4 was unusually populous but this weekend belonged to Jamie Frauenberg. He led Saturday's GTS qualifying with a half-second margin over Fisher (man, these Mid-Atlantic guys learn tracks quickly!) who, in turn, led Ralf Lindakers, Joe Magalotti and Marc Ruhling. Denny Pedri was DQ'd for skipping impound.

In the race, Frauenberg jumped out to an early lead over Fisher, putting ten cars between them by the third lap but Fisher's learning curve was leaning in his direction. By lap nine he was back in touch with Frauenberg and the two of them ran together from there until the end of the race with Frauenberg ultimately winning, followed by Fisher, Magalotti, Pedri and Ruhling. Lindakers was DQ'd for a pass under yellow.

Sunday morning, Frauenberg qualified second overall in GTS (behind Korey Deason) and first in GTS4 followed by Fisher a scant 0.05 seconds back, followed by Lindakers, Magalotti, Ruhling and Pedri, in that order. In the race, it was a near carbon-copy of Saturday's event with Frauenberg winning over Fisher by a five-second margin, followed by Lindakers, Ruhling and Pedri. Magalotti was



nasa
NATIONAL AUTO SPORT ASSOCIATION

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

a DNS.

Overall

With my car not quite ready for the season, I, along with fellow GTSer Sean Tillinghast, got tagged to help out as Race Director. I took the Thunder group while Sean had Lightning. As a spectator from Race Control this weekend, I have to say it was great seeing the amount of close competition we had in every GTS class. It was also great spending a little time with some new faces from the East Coast. We can expect to see a lot more new faces and even tougher competition as the year progresses...which will be nothing but good for GTS racing.

Our next event is May 13-15 at Putnam Park. I hope to see you there!

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

Scott Good
German Touring Series Series Director
NASA Great Lakes

NASA Contact:
Bryan Cohn
Director of Competition
NASA Midwest, Inc.
bcohn@nasamidwest.com