

STEVIE SMITH WINS RAIN-DELAYED CHAMPION RACING OIL WILLIAMS GROVE NATIONAL OPEN

Pennsylvania native scores third career triumph in prestigious event, taking \$50,000 ahead of outlaw Schatz

MECHANICSBURG, PA – The sun was finally out at Williams Grove Speedway, and after three days of rain, the Champion Racing Oil Williams Grove National Open was completed Sunday night with Stevie Smith earning the \$50,000 win.

It was Smith's third win in the event, but first since 1991.

Smith nearly had his third National Open win last year, but contact from eventual winner David Gravel ended his chances.

Smith, of Broken Arrow, Okla., has been dominate in his appearances at Williams Grove this season and dominated again for his third win in the event and a \$50,000 payday.

"It's amazing," said Smith. "Twenty-four years later here we are. This all goes to Fred Rahmer and the crew. They have given me a really good racecar. I tried not to make too many mistakes. They've done a really good job and they're the reason we're standing out here."

Two years ago, Smith's car owner Fred Rahmer won the National Open in his final attempt before becoming a car owner.

"I've never won a \$50,000 to win race," said Smith. "I wanted to win it since Fred won it and I wanted to win it for Fred and I wanted to win it for me and Nikki, too. It has been a really good year and this just tops it off."

For Rahmer, it was career win No. 100 at Williams Grove between driving and owning cars.

"It's absolutely unbelievable," said Rahmer. "The money's great, but to win this race and have Donny Schatz second.... what a great job the guys did. When Donny was behind us, I didn't have to worry like I did last year or we'd probably have three of these in a row."

Danny Dietrich led the field to the green flag in the 40-lap Champion Racing Oil National Open. Smith fell into second and raced in Dietrich's shadow over the opening laps.

The leaders reached lapped traffic with eight laps down. Smith was glued to Dietrich's bumper as they raced down the frontstretch and into turn one. Smith would get by Dietrich for the lead off turn two. They swapped the lead in turns three and four, but Smith secured control off turn four to complete lap nine. Dietrich tried another slider in turns one and two, but wasn't close enough to make the pass.

They raced in heavy lapped traffic and Smith was able to pull away slightly. Donny Schatz was back up to fifth by lap 15.

Smith made a two-car pass off turn four to get more breathing room between himself and Dietrich. Logan Schuchart was challenging Dietrich for the runner-up spot when Dietrich made

contact with the lapped car of Austin Hogue in turn three. Dietrich did a 360-spin and kept going, but lost several spots, and the caution flag didn't come out.

Schatz was now up to third and drove by Schuchart off turn two and into second. He was 2.88 seconds and three lapped cars behind Smith.

The first caution flag didn't fly until nine laps to go when Lucas Wolfe slowed on the backstretch with a flat tire. This erased Smith's 2.11 second lead.

Smith was able to pull away from Schatz over the next two laps, but the caution flew again as Brent Marks and Greg Hodnett slowed after their bumpers got hooked together on the backstretch. They were running eighth and ninth. This turned into an open red flag period.

Smith took the inside lane for the double-file restart giving Schatz the top. Smith went to the middle in turn one and would secure the lead from Schatz.

"I know he's the best driver in the nation," said Smith of Schatz. "I just drive my race. I look forward and try not to worry about whose beside me or behind me. I knew Donny was going to be tough. I ran the pace as hard as my car would let me. I eased up a little the last couple of laps knowing I needed to stay down. You don't want to give them away, but you have to watch that you don't get running too easy."

Hogue hit the outside fourth turn fence and then flipped coming down the frontstretch bringing out the red flag again. Under Outlaws rules, the restart was now single-file because one more lap wasn't completed.

Smith controlled the final laps to secure the win over Schatz, who did close over the final lap, but was 0.513 seconds behind Smith at the finish. Logan Schuchart, Justin Henderson and 12th starter Brian Montieth completed the top five.

"I did everything I could," said Schatz. "Stevie was really good. He made all the lines on the racetrack work for him. We got ourselves buried at the beginning. We had to pass them back one by one without traffic. We got going there about the lap 20 mark, but it was almost too late. These guys gave me an awesome car."

Dietrich, Alan Krimes, Daryn Pittman, Lance Dewease and Cory Haas rounded out the top 10.

The 49-car field was split into two groups for qualifying time trials. Stevie Smith set overall fast time with a lap of 18.461 seconds. Brian Montieth had fast time in the second group at 18.490. The one-day purse was over \$130,000.

Ryan Taylor, Daryn Pittman, Brent Marks, Donny Schatz, Lance Dewease and Greg Hodnett won the eight-lap heat races. Kerry Madsen won the D-main, Aaron Ott won the C-main, Danny Dietrich the dash and Brian Montieth the B-main.

Joey Saldana and Kerry Madsen used Outlaw provisionals and Aaron Ott and Austin Hogue used track provisionals.

Champion Racing Oil Sprint Car National Open (40 laps): 1. Stevie Smith. 2. Donny Schatz. 3. Logan Schuchart. 4. Justin Henderson. 5. Brian Montieth. 6. Danny Dietrich. 7. Alan Krimes. 8. Daryn Pittman. 9. Lance Dewease. 10. Cory Haas. 11. Ryan Taylor. 12. Shane Stewart. 13. Gerard McIntyre Jr. 14. Cody Darrah. 15. Sammy Swindell. 16. Greg Hodnett. 17. Pat Cannon. 18. Brent Marks. 19. Ryan Smith. 20. Jac Haudenschild. 21. Brad Sweet. 22. Kerry Madsen. 23. Joey Saldana. 24. Aaron Ott. 25. Austin Hogue. 26. Brock Zearfoss. 27. Lucas Wolfe. 28. Doug Esh.

B-main (12 laps): 1. Brian Montieth. 2. Alan Krimes. 3. Jac Haudenschild. 4. Gerald McIntyre Jr. 5. Cody Darrah. 6. Doug Esh. 7. Jacob Allen. 8. Steve Buckwalter. 9. David Gravel. 10. Paul McMahan. 11. Kyle Moody. 12. Nicole Bower. 13. Adam Wilt. 14. Aaron Ott.

C-main (10 laps): 1. Aaron Ott. 2. Paul McMahan. 3. Chase Dietz. 4. Joey Saldana. 5. Jason Sides. 6. Austin Hogue. 7. Paige Polyak. 8. Jim Siegel. 9. Kerry Madsen. 10. Rodney Westhafer. 11. J.J. Grasso. 12. Mark Smith.

D-main (8 laps): 1. Kerry Madsen. 2. J.J. Grasso. 3. Jason Johnson. 4. R.J. Johnson. 5. Glendon Forsythe. 6. Tim Shaffer. 7. Wayne Dadetto. 8. Troy Fraker. DNS – Tim Glatfelter