

Dewease Claims Emotional 56th Annual Williams Grove National Open Victory
Fayetteville driver gets fourth event win for fourth car owner over outlaws

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Mechanicsburg - Some may say it was fate. And some may say it was divine intervention.

But whatever it was that propelled Lance Dewease to victory in the 56th annual Champion Racing Oil National Open at Williams Grove Speedway on Saturday night, it made the stars align for one of the most special nights in the history of the Pennsylvania Posse as Dewease honored fallen oval and National Open champion Greg Hodnett with the win.

Dewease took his storied fourth win in the historic event worth \$56,000 over the World of Outlaws sprint cars, beating Daryn Pittman for the prestigious triumph.

"This is the greatest one of them all," said an emotional Dewease of his four total Open wins.

"Everybody don't know how hard it was on me this week," he said of enduring the tragic loss of friend and competitor, Williams Grove champion and Open victor Greg Hodnett within the last seven days.

"This is all about Greg. He was a great racer. Off the racetrack he was a better person than that."

It was Dewease's fourth checkers in the oval marquee event for as many car owners with previous wins coming for Walt Dyer in 1996, Joe Harz in 2001 and for Al Hamilton in 2002.

The victory in the 2018 version for car owner Donald Kreitz Jr. was Kreitz's second overall in the race with his first coming as an owner/driver in 1993.

To get the emotional win, Dewease had to take the lead from polesitter Brock Zearfoss after the pair shared the front row for the start of the 40-lap Open.

Zearfoss hit the backmarkers on the 11th lap as the leader with Dewease and Brian Montieth in tow but the first caution flag of the race unfurled on the 12th lap when sixth runner Brad Sweet spun in the second turn, collecting five-time Open winner Donny Schatz.

The restart saw Dewease take his first swipes at Zearfoss for the lead, coming on lap 15 in the first and second turns.

With Zearfoss running the cushion, Dewease flew the No. 69K underneath to take the lead but Zearfoss one-upped him as the pair shot onto the backchute and reclaimed command.

The Fayetteville flyer then kept Zearfoss within striking distance on the ensuing laps and again traffic entered the picture on lap 22 with Zearfoss trying to negotiate a line around Jordan Givler to put him one lap down.

Dewease drove right up on Zearfoss during the next two circuits and got a great run through the middle in the first and second turns on lap 24 to make a hair-raising, three-wide move in the second corner to net control.

With Givler on the bottom and Zearfoss on top, Dewease took his shot by driving right up the middle of the pair in the middle of turn two.

He then burst out of the corner three wide before squeezing through the gap to emerge as the leader prior to the backstretch bridge.

A caution flag for refueling then appeared with 15 laps to go and the restart proved pivotal with Dewease choosing the inside lane for the return to action with Zearfoss to his outside.

When the green flag appeared, Dewease and Zearfoss raced out of the fourth corner with Dewease driving up across the track while Zearfoss held firm on the top lane.

The pair made contact as they headed for the flagstand but Dewease gained firm control with Zearfoss tucked in behind as they hit the first turn.

However Zearfoss then suddenly turned sideways and backed his car hard into the outside first turn wall.

When action again got underway, Brian Montieth restarted second with eighth starter Daryn Pittman lining up third.

Pittman drove by Montieth on the restart but failed to gain on Dewease even as the leader entered the backmarkers with six laps to go.

At the finish, Dewease's 92nd career oval win came by 2.618 seconds over Pittman, who finished second in the event for the fourth time in his career.

"My car was really good in the A Main," Pittman said, "It really came alive."

"I feel like I just cost us any chance at the race in the dash."

Montieth was third followed by Tim Shaffer and Ryan Smith.

Sixth through 10th went to Brian Brown, TJ Stutts, Paul McMahan, Shane Stewart and Logan Schuchart.

Heats went to Giovanni Scelzi, TJ Stutts, Brad Sweet, Donny Schatz, Daryn Pittman and Dewease.

Zearfoss and Dewease won the dashes.

Freddie Rahmer took the C Main and David Gravel won the B Main.

Fast time over the 49 car field was set by Scelzi at 16.250 seconds.

Keep up to all the latest speedway news and information by visiting the oval's official website at www.williamsgrove.com or by following the track on Facebook and Twitter.

Feature finish

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410 sprints, 40 laps: 1. Lance Dewease, 2. Daryn Pittman, 3. Brian Montieth, 4. Tim Shaffer, 5. Ryan Smith, 6. Brian Brown, 7. TJ Stutts, 8. Paul McMahan, 9. Shane Stewart, 10. Logan Schuchart, 11. Gerard McIntyre Jr., 12. Cory Haas, 13. Giovanni Scelzi, 14. Donny Schatz, 15. Freddie Rahmer, 16. David Gravel, 17. Sheldon Haudenschild, 18. Lucas Wolfe, 19. Ian Madsen, 20. Carson Macedo, 21. Brent Marks, 22. Jacob Allen, 23. Robbie Kendall, 24. Kraig Kinser, 25. Jordan Givler, 26. Brock Zearfoss, 27. Brad Sweet, 28. Logan Wagner

DNQ: Troy Fraker, Justin Henderson, David Franek, Kyle Moody, Adrian Shaffer, Greg Wilson,, Jac Haudenschild, Steve Buckwalter, Brandon Rahmer, Jim Siegel, Justin Whittall, Anthony Macri, Chase Dietz, Jason Sides, Bud Kaeding, Kyle Reinhardt, Nicole Bower, Alan Krimes, Chad Trout, Danny Dietrich, Trey Starks