

Brent Marks Wins Williams Grove National Open \$65,000

Pittman Records Fifth Runner-Up Finish In Crown Jewel Event

Mechanicsburg - Brent Marks of Myerstown won the richest sprint car race in the history of Williams Grove Speedway and the largest cash payoff ever for a sprint car race in the Eastern United States by claiming victory in the 57th annual Champion Racing Oil National Open on Saturday night, taking \$65,000 for the prestigious win.

A former regular at the track before going on the road with the World of Outlaws Sprint Cars Series a few years ago, Marks scored the World of Outlaws victory by turning back challenges by both Brian Brown and Daryn Pittman in the 40-lap affair.

Marks would lead the first two circuits of the race over polesitter Brown before the first caution flag of the race appeared.

On the restart, Missouri's Brown beat Marks out of the fourth corner to take control of the race while Pittman and eighth starter Donny Schatz trailed.

With one-quarter of the race in the books, the front trio of Brown, Marks and Pittman were running under a blanket on the cushion as Brad Sweet began challenging Schatz for fourth.

California's Sweet made a bold slice across the third and fourth turns to motor by Schatz for position on the 12th circuit but he couldn't hold his momentum and instead ended up losing the spot back to Schatz plus another position to Aaron Reutzel.

Seconds later, Marks got close enough to Brown to pull a slide job in the first corner and come up with the lead while at the same time, Pittman used the fracas to bypass Brown as well.

A second caution period developed on lap 14 for a slowing Danny Dietrich.

The new green saw Pittman beat Marks out of the fourth corner to take control while Reutzel went through the middle groove in the second turn to drive by Schatz with a power move.

However a third turn tangle moments later between Lance Dewease and Ian Madsen forced the yellow flag to reappear before the lap could be completed, negating both moves by Pittman and Reutzel.

The yellow flag then turned red for refueling so that the field could go the distance of the 20-mile event.

Marks held sway on the restart with Reutzel again powering by Schatz in the third and fourth turns on lap 16 only to see Schatz go back into the spot on the ensuing circuit.

Meanwhile, Marks hit the rear of the field with 17 laps to go, allowing both Pittman and Schatz to close as he struggled to put cars a lap down.

During the final 10 laps of the race, Marks continued to struggle with traffic but finally made a hole with five laps to go when he routed both Cory Eliason and Danny Dietrich off the inside of the fourth corner to pull out to a 1.177 second lead at the white flag.

But just as his win seemed assured with less than a lap to go, the yellow flag again appeared for a blown tire on the machine of Paul McMahan.

The blown tire forced a green-white-checker finish of the race and gave Pittman a clear shot the stealing the win away.

Pittman blew his car in on the top in turn one as the field took the new green but bobbled on the cushion as he set the car into the corner, taking the edge off of the finish as Marks then got away to the win by 1.402 seconds.

“This is amazing” I’ve been wanting to win this very race for a long time. I grew up here in the infield. This is where I fell in love with sprint car racing,” Marks said with his daughter by his side after taking her atop the wing after climbing from the car.

“I tried to play it smart all night. I can’t believe we just won the National Open!”

Oklahoma’s Pittman ended up settling for an uncanny fifth runner-up finish in the prestigious race.

“I’d trade every single one of ‘em for one win,” Pittman said of all his second-place finishes.

“I would trade every one of my wins here for one of these,” he continued.

“You get that close to winning one of these crown jewels and you wanna get the job done and we just keep coming up short.”

Five-time National Open champion Schatz ended the race in third followed by Reutzel and Friday night winner David Gravel.

Reutzel earned 2019 Rookie Of The Race honors and \$3,000 for the award.

Sixth through 10th went to Freddie Rahmer, Brown, 26th starter Brian Montieth, Sweet and Sheldon Haudenschild.

Heats went to Gravel, Rahmer, Reutzel, Schatz, Pittman and Sweet with twin dashes going to Brown and Marks.

Wayne Johnson won the C Main and Trey Starks took the B Main.

Gravel set fast time over the 49-car field for the second night in a row with a lap of 16.909 seconds.

The win was the ninth of Marks’s career at Williams Grove Speedway.

The race closed the 2019 season at the track.

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

Feature Finishes

410 sprints, 25 laps: 1. Brent Marks, 2. Daryn Pittman, 3. Donny Schatz, 4. Aaron Reutzel, 5. David Gravel, 6. Freddie Rahmer, 7. Brian Brown, 8. Brian Montieth, 9. Brad Sweet, 10. Sheldon Haudenschild, 11. Kerry Madsen, 12. Matt Campbell, 13. Carson Macedo, 14. Logan Schuchart, 15. Giovanni Scelzi, 16. TJ Stutts, 17. Tim Shaffer, 18. Trey Starks, 19. Paul McMahan, 20. Ryan Smith, 21. Cory Eliason, 22. Shane Stewart, 23. Ian Madsen, 24. Cory Haas, 25. Danny Dietrich, 26. Logan Wagner, 27. Jacob Allen, 28. Lance Dewease, 29. Chad Trout

DNQ: Troy Fraker, Brett Michalski, Chase Dietz, Barry Shearer, Nicole Bower, Steve Buckwalter, Mason Daniel, Brock Zearfoss, Lucas Wolfe, Justin Whittal, Wayne Johnson, Jared Esh, Dylan Cisney, Robbie Kendall, Alan Krimes, Jason Sides, Anthony Macri, Bill Balog, Landon Myers, Kraig Kinser