



## The Notebook: FINALE FRIDAY

September 18, 2009

It still amazes me that last weekend we had seven drivers still in legitimate contention for the C&R Auto Supply Sportsman title. I know, I know, it shouldn't because we have the best Sportsman drivers around and it shows each week as the competition is close but for a season to come down to a tie in the end for the championship was a treat for everyone in attendance on Friday.

You could tell by the Jeff Dillman cheering section on the front straightaway whether the Musquodoboit driver was alright or not on the track. Gasps, followed by sighs of relief took over their faces when cars in front of the #08 Absolute Traffic Services Chevrolet Impala made contact and spun. Both times, Dillman came out unscathed and continued his run to the front. Terry Roma and Dillman kept swapping the point lead and championship back and forth with every car they passed as the lead was only four points heading into the feature thanks to a great heat race performance by Dillman. In the end, it was Dillman coming down across the stripe in second with Roma crossing in fourth with Colby Smith sandwiched between the two at the finish of the 25 lap feature. With that result, the two point leaders tied for the championship and with the tiebreaker being the most main feature wins, the championship in '09 will belong to Dillman!

The Roma boys got to the top by being consistent throughout the 2009 season. Matt Kenseth rode consistency to the 2003 NASCAR Cup Championship and it almost paid off for the Romas in '09. Though the #38 Doug Forbes Century 21 Classic Grand Prix went feature winless this season, the yellow and green #38 was up front every race and within striking distance of the leaders. That kind of consistency creates championships and the '08 champ in the Sportsman will look to parlay that momentum next season into another Sportsman crown!

During the winter I will be once again be putting together season reviews for the classes and with the Sportsman class having one of the closest point standings in recent years it will be one of those must reads this offseason!

### FITZPATRICK IMPRESSES IN SPEEDWORLD RUN

Cambridge, Ontario's J.R. Fitzpatrick made his debut at the Scotia Speedworld oval a memorable one. He stepped into the #3 CAT Rental Store Legend usually piloted by Vance Hanes while Vance wheeled the #23 RacingTrader.ca/Bedford Dooly's Legend on Friday night and Fitzpatrick wasted no time making a statement that he wanted a checkered flag. Fitzpatrick nearly slipped his way to a heat win on Friday but he, along with a few other drivers, couldn't skate their way over all the oil put down on the race track by another car. With the way the qualifying system works at Scotia though, it put Fitzpatrick on the pole of the main feature and Fitzpatrick didn't disappoint as he ran away from the rest of the Legend car field en route to the Victory.

Saturday brought the Maritime League of Legends race for the youngest Canadian stock car champion and the fastest Legend cars in the Maritimes in attendance; Fitzpatrick was in contention during the 50-lap race but in the end settled for fifth in car number three.

With his successful Scotia Speedworld stop in the books, Fitzpatrick heads back south for this weekend's NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race at the New Hampshire Motor Speedway for Kevin Harvick Incorporated. We wish J.R. good luck in his future endeavors in stock car racing and wish him all the best!

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#### ALEXANDER RETURNS TO TRACK IN #75

We've already seen the #75 R&R Kinsman Auto Salvage Ford Fusion on track this season with veteran Ken Schrader behind the wheel. This time when the #75 rolled out of the trailer though it was the regular driver behind the wheel for the first time this season as Mike Alexander got to run his first Sportsman race of his career. He didn't let his fans down as Alexander picked off cars and made his way to the front of the field in the main feature until he got caught up in a wreck which caused extensive damage to the #75. The car and driver looked like they had been paired together for years as Alexander had a top five run going before the incident happened in front of Alexander.

If Friday's run was any indication, keep your eyes on the #75 next season as he will be hunting checkered flags in the Sportsman division next season!

#### RITCHIE BEATS BROTHER, MAKES HISTORY

It has been a pretty successful year for the Ritchies. Gordon Ritchie, driving his #26 Ritchies Renovations ¾ ton Chevrolet Truck not only became one of the first truck entries in the Hobby Stock division, but he became the first champion in said division – taking the rights to the first racing truck to ever win a title at Scotia Speedworld! It wasn't easy though as he had to hold off his brother Wayne all night and as the two weaved through the field to get to the front, Gordon got the advantage of getting clean air first in the feature and ran away with it, winning the final feature of the season. Even though Wayne couldn't best his brother in the championship hunt, Wayne still had one of the best rookie seasons we've seen in a while. Wayne took away three feature wins in his #82 CARQUEST Mustang along with the 2009 Rookie of the Year honors to go with his second place overall in the standings! You can bet that they'll both be happy campers when they receive their awards in just over a month at the Banquet in Truro!

#### MACLEAN NIPS MACNEILL FOR TRACK TITLE

As exciting as the Sportsman point chase was, the Legends put on a chase as well with former champs Scott MacLean and Justin MacNeill. With MacNeill closing the gap to two points after the heat, the game plan was simple if MacLean wanted to close out another track championship at Scotia – finish in front of the #10. The two made their way to the front of the feature and though it looked like the Bedford driver of the Cummins/Parts for Trucks #10 was strong late in the race it wasn't enough to muscle past the Maritime Auto Supply #61 from Pictou, which finished third in the feature, one spot ahead of MacNeill. With that, Scott MacLean becomes track champion for 2009 at Scotia Speedworld for the second time in four seasons (he was champ in 2006). With their season winding down on the Maritime League of Legends Tour this weekend, the focus will soon switch to 2010 and you'll have all the info on your favorite Legends drivers as it becomes available here at [ScotiaSpeedworld.ca](http://ScotiaSpeedworld.ca)!

#### EDDY FINALLY GRABS TRACK TITLE

Even though Brad Eddy scored a Canadian Championship for Bandoleros from INEX, the track championship still eluded the Lower Sackville driver – until this past week. The consistency of Eddy, combined with the checkered flags amassed this season gave Eddy the championship over '06 champ DJ Casey. All Casey could do on Finale Friday was to win the heat and the feature and let everything else fall into place behind him. He took care of the first part but Eddy came on strong as well, finishing second in both races to take the title!

Eddy becomes the fourth different champ in four years of the division and is eyeing a move to the Legends division. Eddy has been running select races on the Maritime League of Legends Tour, including a top five run at Speedway 660 in Geary, N.B. before an incident took the #28 out of contention. Eddy, along with Casey and Shelby Baker all have run Legend cars this season and head up the wave of future

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stock car drivers in the Maritimes who all got their start at Scotia Speedworld!

#### MICHAUD AND MACCALLUM START TO TAKE TITLES

Dan Michaud Jr. capped off a run to the championship in the Miller Tire Lightning class with a win in the final main feature this season as he battled with Trevor Smith for the victory on Finale Friday. In the highly competitive division all Michaud had to do last Friday was to start the main feature to win the championship as even though there were new cars racing in the division, there were not enough cars to re-coop the deficit that second place point man Russell Smith Jr. needed to overcome to take the title away from the #119 R&R Kinsman Auto Salvage Neon. At the end of the feature, Michaud and Russell Smith lined up their front bumper on the back straightaway and lit the tires up in a burnout to celebrate the '09 season!

Like Michaud, Derek MacCallum had to only start the main feature to win the 2009 title over Dave Matthews. Matthews did all he could to keep himself in contention as he put on a show in front of the field in the Miller Tire Thunder car main feature en route to the win. Though the Chapman Auto Body Civic won the feature, MacCallum's had the True North Diner Civic up front in each of the features this season, racking up podium finishes like they were going out of style! MacCallum made a start in the #22 True North Diner Legend car on Saturday as part of the Maritime League of Legends Tour and with Thunder standout Kyle Gammon being rumored to move to Legends in 2009, it could make for a great battle for the rookie honors in that class in 2009 between MacCallum and Gammon! Time will tell as we roll towards the '10 season!

Once again, congratulations to all of our Champions this season at Scotia Speedworld. Championships and Race Wins can take many years to achieve and the six Weekly Racing Series champs have come out of the smoke, burning rubber and in some cases, heavy fog this season to hoist the big trophies. They will all be presented with their awards on October 24<sup>th</sup> at the Best Western Glengarry in Truro. All indications point towards another sellout for this year end event, so get your ticket reservations in to the office now!

Until next week, keep the hammer down and we'll see you at the track!