

USAC Mopar .25 Midget "Battle at the Brickyard" 2012

The entire city of Indianapolis was full of racecars, trailers, and fans for the week, as the NASCAR Sprint Cup, Nationwide and Grand Am races were held at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Mini Indy was the site for the USAC Mopar .25 Midgets "Battle at the Brickyard" Generation Next Round 11 event. Close to 250 cars were registered.

The USAC 'Prelude to the Brickyard Pit Party' began on Wednesday after several rounds of practice. The evening kicked off with an autograph session with 19 drivers meeting a long line of kids and families. At the head of the table sat USAC Champion/IndyCar Rookie, Bryan Clausen. Other drivers included Davey Hamilton, Sr, Davey Hamilton, Jr, Bobby Santos, Jerry Coons, Jr, Billy Wease, Mario Clouser, Kyle Hamilton, Taylor Ferns, Thomas Meseraull, Tyler and Taylor Courtney, Jessica Bean, Emmy Gray, Gage Walker, Ross Rankine, Cooper Clouse, Ryan Christian and Indy Car Driver, Pippa Mann.

A complimentary dinner of pulled pork, salads, mac-n-cheese and dessert was provided by sponsorship from the Mini Indy Club, Advanced Racing Suspension, Baker Racing Engines, BullRider Racecars, Robbie Stanley Racing, and Briggs and Stratton. INDYCar provided 'Goody Bags' for the drivers with shirts and other items.

The famous Indianapolis 500 Gordon Pipers led the procession of drivers onto the track surface. USAC Executives Kevin Miller, President & CEO as well as Jason Smith and James Spink were introduced along with INDYCar, Grass Roots Marketing Manager, Jason Penix. Troy McCall of Honda and Dave Klaus of Briggs and Stratton joined in the procession of drivers. Our guest drivers, most of whom had competed in Quarter Midgets, were also introduced.

After a great performance by the Pipers and the playing of America the Beautiful, the National Anthem was played as parachute jumpers made their way with our nations colors as well as a checkered flag. Mini Indy gave the flag to USAC handing the track over for the "Battle at the Brickyard" week.

Thursday morning, heat races were run and complete by 1:30 in the afternoon. Drivers and their families headed out to Raceway Park. Both winning drivers for the "Rich Vogler Classic were former Quarter Midget drivers. Bobby Santos won the Traxxas Silver Crown race and Tracy Hines won the USAC Mopar Midget event.

Friday Semi Mains were run before a tour of Tony Stewart Racing. Representatives of the AARP Foundation, Jeff Gordon's Drive to End Hunger came out to visit the top 3 drivers who had collected sponsorship for heat races. There were also 2 Red Rookie and a Blue Rookie A Mains along with Mopar Victory Lane Awards and Rookie Class photos.

Saturday morning met with cooler temperatures; just perfect racing weather. AARP Executives returned with information for the top 3 collectors to meet with Jeff Gordon on Sunday at the Brickyard 400. "We were so impressed with the hospitality of your staff, the races and the entire event," said Jim Nedohon of AARP. "We wanted to come back out and let you know that we want to take 6 drivers to meet Jeff."

There were 14 main events run on Saturday, ending with Tech. Brickyard Champions were presented with a commemorative Brick as well as adorned with the traditional wreath. First, Second and Third place winners were presented with Gold, Silver and Bronze USAC Medals. Honda Contingency Awards were also available as well as Simpson Gift Certificates for the winners. Briggs and Stratton gave Amsoil 4T Oil to 2nd & 3rd place finishers in World Formula Classes as well as a Pressure Washer to the winners. Animal Class winners received a new 'Whisper Quiet' Generator, 2nd place a pressure washer and 3rd place winners, Amsoil 4T Oil. All podium finishers also received Hoosier Neck Bands.

USAC would like to thank the entire Mini Indy club for hosting the 2012 National event. The entire complex was wrapped in banners of bricks. It was certainly a "Battle at the Brickyard" to remember!

To end the weekend, USAC .25 drivers, who had pre-registered by July 9, received tickets to the "Brickyard 400" at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Townsend Wright, Cole Roseman, Collin Miller, Ben Buchard, and Logan and Ryan Huggler, were treated to the hospitality of the AARP Foundation with goodies from the AARP Fan trailer, a VIP ride to the Plaza Area and a Meet and Greet with Jeff Gordon. Gordon took time to have a private meeting with the drivers first to shake their hand and thank them for collecting for AARP. Once in the event, Jeff again thanked the kids and announced that they had collected \$2,047 to be donated to help feed Seniors in the Indianapolis area. As he introduced the .25 drivers to the crowd, he said, "I started running quarter midgets at 5 years old. These kids are the future of racing. I firmly believe that if I hadn't been racing quarter midgets as a kid, I wouldn't be here today." These 6 drivers were also treated to a visit to Tech as well as a private simulator ride in the Sprint Fan Zone.

Next up for the .25 Midget Drivers will be the "Carolina Clash" at Bobby Labonte's track in Salisbury, NC. Sign-Ins and practice for Round 12, will be on Thursday, with heat races on Friday and mains on Saturday. The event also coincides with USAC'S Eastern Midget Week for the Ignite Midget Series – 4 races in 5 days.

"Battle at the Brickyard winners were: Neal Allison of Greensboro, NC (Jr Honda), Carson Hocevar of Portage, MI (Sr Honda), Rich Speeney of New Town, PA (Hvy Honda), Harrison Burton of Huntersville, NC (Lt 160 Honda and Briggs Sr Animal), Mark Miller of Mooresville, NC (Hvy 160), Connor Gross of Middleton, MA (Briggs Jr Animal), Wil Raber of Allegan, MI (Briggs UR Animal), Tyler Ankrum of Yucaipa, CA (Lt Mod), Collin Olson of Maplewood, MN (Hvy Mod), Gage Walker of Fairland, IN, (Briggs Lt World Formula), Kyle Lee of Mercersburg, PA (Briggs Hvy World Formula), Nathaniel Brinker of Allentown, PA (Lt 'AA) and Frankie Nervo of Stow, OH (Hvy 'AA).

