

Bloomquist Claims Lucas Oil Late Model Crown With Series Finale Victory

ROME, GA - Scott Bloomquist of Mooresburg, Tenn. clinched the 2009 Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series National Championship in grand fashion by winning the final series race of the year on Sunday night at Rome Speedway.

Bloomquist led all 50 laps to take the \$10,000 first place money, but more importantly will take home the \$75,000 first place check for winning his first ever Lucas Oil Series title.

The boss of Team Zero led a clean sweep of his chassis' as Dan Schlieper finished second followed by Chris Madden in third. Completing the top five were Shane Clanton and Casey Roberts.

Dale McDowell and Bloomquist started on the front row of the 40th and final Lucas Oil Series race of 2009 the Rome Showdown which was sponsored by Coal America's Energy.

Bloomquist started off quick grabbing the lead from the onset followed by Jimmy Owens, McDowell, Roberts and Clanton.

Clanton moved to fourth on lap two passing Roberts, who fell to fifth.

Bloomquist continued to hold a steady pace early on, expanding his lead lap after lap as he started to enter traffic only ten laps into the race.

Owens began to close on Bloomquist as he lapped his first car, 12 laps in.

As Owens set his sights on Bloomquist, McDowell got back into things as the polesitter passed Owens for second on the 14th circuit.

On a lap 19 restart Bloomquist still held the point as Clanton would become the new second place car by lap 23 as he passed McDowell.

At the halfway mark of the race Bloomquist still held a three-car length advantage over Clanton with Dan Schlieper up to third followed by McDowell and Chris Madden.

The top five remained that way until Schlieper powered past Clanton on lap 34 to take over second place.

Schlieper then started to chop

into Bloomquist' lead and with ten laps to go Schlieper closed to within two car lengths of Bloomquist.

With Schlieper closing he would see his momentum halted when the fourth place running McDowell slowed on the track with a flat tire.

The final restart of the race saw Bloomquist hold off Schlieper to score his first Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series win of the season and the 17th of his career.

Bloomquist held a 190-point lead over Jimmy Owens before the night began and with the win by Bloomquist and Owens' 15th place finish the final margin was 285 points in favor of Bloomquist.

LOLMS Feature Finish, 50 Laps: Scott Bloomquist, Dan Schlieper, Chris Madden, Shane Clanton, Casey Roberts, Brad Neat, Clint Smith, John Blankenship, Earl Pearson Jr., Aaron Ridley, Bub McCool, Tony Knowles, Lee Sutton, Tommy Kerr, Jimmy Owens, Dale McDowell, Jonathan Davenport, Steve Casebolt, Jody Knowles, Eric Jacobsen, Don O'Neal, Skip Arp, Randy Weaver, Ray Cook. **Did Not Qualify:** Jonathan Davenport, Randy Weaver, Aaron Ridley, Buster Goss, Rod Carroll, Matt Helbing, JJ Nye, Cody Barnett, Michael Walker, Chuck Laney, Chris Noah, Teddy Snow, Earl Pearson Jr., Jody Summerville.

WOODSTOCK, GA - Taking the lead on lap 23 after starting seventh, Ray Cook led the rest of the way to score his first career Dixie Shootout win last Saturday night at Dixie Speedway.

The Lucas Oil Late Model Dirt Series sanctioned event win for Cook was his fifth this year as he collected \$10,000 for the win in the 20th Annual Dixie Shootout, which was sponsored by Coal America's Energy.

Dan Schlieper finished second followed by new track record holder Earl Pearson Jr., Clint Smith and Jimmy Owens.

Owens and Smith would start on the front row of the 50 lap event with Smith grabbing the early lead followed by Owens, Schlieper, Tony Knowles and Bub McCool.

Cook coming from the inside on row four was on the move early as he passed McCool for fifth on lap two and then a couple of circuits later he was up to the fourth spot around

Knowles.

Smith and Owens were setting a quick pace around the D-shaped track as they opened up a three-car length advantage over Schlieper, who was still holding down the third spot. Cook then put the heat on Schlieper passing him for third on lap 14.

Cook the quickly chased down Owens and raced side-by-

side with him as they crossed the stripe with 15 laps complete.

Cook then cleared Owens for second officially on lap 16 taking over the second spot. With Cook on the move Smith's lead looked precarious as Cook tracked him down in a matter on five laps, which was helped by the first caution of the race for a slowing Skip Arp on the

main straightaway.

On the restart it was Smith still in the lead, but he had Cook right on his tail and as the two cars crossed the stripe Smith held a scant half a car length lead over Cook who had pulled alongside him.

Cook took the outside route on lap 22 passing Smith for the lead coming off of turn number four.

Finish: Ray Cook, Dan Schlieper, Earl Pearson Jr., Clint Smith, Jimmy Owens, Dale McDowell, Shane Clanton, Chris Madden, Scott Bloomquist, Jonathan Davenport, Tommy Kerr, Brad Neat, Bub McCool, Freddy Smith, Steve Casebolt, John Blankenship, Aaron Ridley, Eric Jacobsen, Tony Knowles, Don O'Neal, Ethan Hunter, Jake Knowles, Randy Weaver, Skip Arp. **Did Not Qualify:** Lee Sutton, William Thomas, Dwayne Jackson, Wayne Echols, Mark Sims, David Payne, Bob Gibby, JJ Nye, Frank Ingram, Cody Barnett, Andrew Jenkins, Jody Knowles, Chuck Laney, Anthony Hill, Kayne Hickman, Lamar Haygood, Ricky Williams, Craig Scott, Michael Page, Mark Douglas, Michael Walker, Johnny Chastain

Q & A With SuperNationals Race Promoter, Brett Deyo



For Brett Deyo, sleep was hard to come by this past week. With an event that has been anticipated for the past seven months, it was time to find out if all the hard work and promotion had payed off. An expected forecast of rain caused fear for those who were involved in the event, but the clouds dissipated and the sun broke through in time for the fans to come and enjoy an exciting night of ¼ mile dirt track racing at Five Mile Point for the SuperNationals. Brett Deyo shares some insight about the success of the event and importance of promotion.

Alison Byram: "How many years have you been promoting the SuperNationals event?"

Brett Deyo: "In 2006 was the first year we promoted this event at Afton Speedway. It was difficult for me to exclusively promote due to other commitments. This is our second year promoting the event, but at Five Mile Point this year."

Byram: "How do you think your promotional tactics differ from other promoters?"

Deyo: "My tactics are different because I do not have the weekly grind. I have one race and can work all summer to promote that race. I do not have to worry about track preparation and concessions and the weekly management of an event. I announced this event in March and being associated with Area Auto Racing News for 12 years has allowed me to know contacts more personally. It helps because I can easily call a driver because we have a positive relationship."

Byram: "In comparison, how was the 2009 SuperNationals event compared to the event in 2006 at Afton Speedway?"

Deyo: "We did very well in 2006 at Afton Speedway for our first event. In 2006 I did not have the sponsorship like this year so I couldn't advertise as heavily. With time, I have gained more contacts and that really helps. This year's spectator count blew 2006's event out of the water. In 2006, we had 54 entries, and 70 this year, with a 16 car count improvement. One thing was similar about both events, they had great racing."

Byram: "With a sluggish economy, how do you appeal dirt track racing events to spectators?"

Deyo: "The whole basis of this show is to give people who cannot afford to race or attend Super Dirt Weeks an opportunity. It is a low-budget alternative. It may not have the names like Brett Hearn, but it has local, stand-out talent. Everything is fairly reasonably priced. Registration was only \$15 dollars up until the day of the event and pit admission was \$30 dollars. We also offered a family five-pack for \$40 dollars that included five drinks and hot-dogs. That package appealed to a lot of people and went over well. I believe there is a market for family short track events."

Byram: "You have been said to be "racer friendly" with your promotional tactics. How is that?"

Deyo: "This event does not pay a lot at the top. A \$5,000 dollar purse to the winner is decent but not a Freedom 76 payday. Everyone left with something. Tenth place still received \$500 dollars. In addition, we had a bunch of contingency awards. A dozen of teams left with additional earnings, whether it was a gift card to speed shop of cash. Everyone left with something."

Byram: "Having a unique view on racing, promotionally and as a writer, how do you think the outlook of dirt track racing is?"

Deyo: "I really believe that events like the SuperNationals, Freedom 76, King of Can are great events. It doesn't take a ton of money to go and the rules are open. You don't have to change your entire car to race at a different track. I believe these types of events are the wave of the future. There are too many rules that restrict people from racing other events because they don't coincide with their local track. These events have local rules, are reasonable to get into, and can be completed in a day or two. If you own a gym why would I turn somebody away for wearing a certain brand of sneaker? I want everyone to work out."

Byram: "For drivers who race for a living, do you think it is necessary to have a promoter?"

Deyo: "Yes, there needs to be these types of events that are higher paying. Super Late Model events have enough higher paying shows that you can be successful doing it for a living. Modified racing is different but there have been successful drivers that

do it. Billy Pauch has made a great living for his family by racing and has made smart decisions. Craig Von Dohren has been successful racing for a living and younger talent is attempting to and being successful, such as Mike Gular and Stewart Friesen. It is not easy anymore. Everyone has similar stuff. Having higher paying shows helps the odds for a driver who races for a living."

Byram: "What is your most valuable asset as a promoter?"

Deyo: "Communication. I am able to do a lot myself, such as, press releases and websites. It takes the delay away. Whether I am communicating through the telephone, trade magazines, message boards, newspapers, or advertising, it is getting the message out there. Since the announcement of this event, I have produced over 30 press releases for the event. Getting commitments was the hardest part to advertise. Imagine trying to sell a baseball game and not knowing what teams are playing. It took a lot of time to try to find who was committed to the event, but I think it payed off. It is hard to sell if you do not know who is performing."

Byram: "You say that you used message boards as a source of advertisement. How do you think that benefited you?"

Deyo: "Whether people post or sign their name or not, everybody looks. I try to be professional with my posting on the message board. It helps me a ton with the *Reading Eagle*, a local paper. It had increased the hits tremendously. I was able to give up to the minute updates on the race and weather. It helps create the buzz and can be used as a tool and can be a big asset."

Byram: "Racing parallel to Super Dirt Week, do you think it helps or hinders your event and car counts?"

Deyo: "It definitely helps because our event is geared towards the smaller team. The only way I can guarantee that the big kings won't be there is if I race against Super Dirt Week. If Decker or Hearn see an event that pays \$5,000 to win, they will be there, but not during Super Dirt Week. In addition, you can't find another weekend in the post-season where you only have one other event to compete with. Also Syracuse is only about an hour away so we attracted a lot of their fans. This event gives the local guys a chance."

Byram: "With 70 modifieds, this is one of the largest car counts for a local, non-sanctioned event. What made your event draw so many cars?"

Deyo: "Nobody had to buy anything related to the open rules. We had a wide open tire rule with an open engine rule. The only requirement was weight depending on a big-block or small-block engine. Five Mile Point is a wide ¼ mile and specific engine rules aren't as important and many combinations can work and it was proven. In addition, the track is centrally located and on average each team had about a two hour tow."

Byram: "Do you think opening the rules increased the amount of cars at the SuperNationals event?"

Deyo: "Absolutely. In the month leading up to the event, the rules took most of my time. I talked to engine builders and racers and everyone involved before I made my decision. We had all types of combinations; small-block, big-block, ethanol, and tires by all three top manufacturers (Hoosiers, American Racer, Goodyear). That made the difference."

Byram: "Do you think it is easier to promote a ¼ mile race track related to the ability to open up the rules?"

Deyo: "Yes. The size of the track makes the event what it is. Taking it to Bridgeport or Orange County makes it more difficult to promote because a smaller track evens the playing field. Racers that were successful most likely wouldn't have been with the same combination at a larger track."

Byram: "Promoters typically get a lot of flack by racecar drivers and fans. Do you think the race promoter determines the success of an event?"

Deyo: "I think the promoter has a lot of influence. The track surface and reputation of the speedway and racers and location are all factors, but somebody needs to be driving the event. If I could choose a hero that I look up to it would be Alex Friesen. I think he would have saved racing from falling into what it has now. Unfortunately, he was killed before he was able to institute a lot of what he had done. I look up to him and what he would have done when I make decisions."

Overall, the event was a great success and would not have been possible without the support from the fans, sponsors, and teams. The race exceeded all expectations and the support was unbelievable. For race fans that missed the event, plans for an event next year and possibly a similar event in the spring are already in the works. Nothing is written or set in stone, but the management cannot see a reason to not do it again next year.

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