

The Family Duels at East Bay Raceway Park

Buzzie & David put on a show at their home track

November 30, 2008

There was a lot of hype about NASCAR driver David Reutimann returning to his local track to "...teach the old man how to get around East Bay." Add to this Buzzie Reutimann's vow to "Send the kid back to North Carolina with his tail between his legs," and you have the makings of a real crowd pleaser. This was the scene last night at East Bay Raceway Part in Gibsonton, Florida (just outside of Tampa), where a huge crowd assembled to take in the Speedway's "Mod Gobbler 50" Open Wheel Modified event. In fact, the Reutimann family was out in force, with four Buzzie-prepared OWM cars entered in the program.



In the first heat, Buzzie "The Living Legend" dominated the 10-lap sprint in the "Double Nothin'", winning from the pole and setting the bar for David and the rest of the clan. In the second heat, Buzzie's nephew Greg ran a respectable third in the 00G while David, driving the 00D struggled to a sixth place finish and missed the cut, as did Buzzie's nephew Jeff in the 00J. David and Jeff were then forced to run the B-Main consolation event, which David handily won with a dominating performance. Cousin Jeff finished seventh, missing a transfer spot to the feature.



Clockwise from Top Left - "00", "00D", "00G", "00J"

So, the stage was set for a duel in the program's 50-lap main event. Based on a pill-draw, Buzzie was assigned a fifth-place starting spot in the 24-car field, while David started 13th as a result of his B-Main win. The race itself was chaotic, with many cautions and restarts, but that's not really new for the Open Wheel Modifieds. Buzzie ran as high as third, before an accident forced him to the rear of the pack. Meanwhile, David had his own problems, twice restarting in the rear. With about 12 laps to go, both Buzzie and David began to mow their way through

the field, with Buzzie maintaining a two-position lead on David until about lap 45. On a late restart, David—running the high line—moved past Buzzie, while Buzzie—momentarily caught in traffic—fell two positions behind David. He made a steady run over the last three laps, but fell one position short. David finished seventh, with Buzzie breathing on his neck in eighth. Greg—the remaining Reutimann—finished 19th, the victim of several multi-car accidents.

Incidentally, the race was won by Florida standout driver Jeff Matthews (you may remember him as the car to beat and eventual winner when we sponsored Buzzie at Ocala back in July).

Anyway, judging from the size of his fan club, the cheers every time a Reutimann entered the track, and the number of times the track announcers referred to Buzzie as “The Living Legend,” I think it’s safe to say that the Reutimanns pretty much own East Bay Raceway Park. Everyone Glen and I spoke to at the track and in the pits had the same basic comment: Buzzie lives his motto of “Go First Class.”



Mod Gobbler 50 Winner
Jeff Matthews



How many 68-year olds can you
see doing this?



East Bay Raceway Park
The Clay by the Bay”

We’ll all get to see Buzzie Tuesday evening at our Hall of Fame Induction ceremony and Awards Night. Be sure to stop by and see him...he loves to chat about racing.

Gerry Hafer
Newsletter Editor