

Volume 32 • No. 7 • 2019

# THE WINNING EDGE

YOUR TOTAL MOTORSPORTS MAGAZINE

**MICHIGAN'S NEW  
VINTAGE WORLD  
CHAMPION  
BRICE PRETZEL**

## Inside:

- WHAT'S HOT  
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RACE #2



Photo by  
Theresa Hazard

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# WHAT'S HOT

*Racing News*

## Speedway 95, next stop for East Coast Snowcross Series, Presented by Woody's Traction and FXR



CLARKSBURG, Mass. — After a successful season opener in southeastern New Hampshire, race teams and officials at East Coast Snocross (ECS) are headed north for the annual Dysart's Snocross on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 26-27, at Speedway 95 in Hermon, Maine.

Spectator gates open at 10 a.m. each day. Tickets are \$12 per day for adults or \$20 for a weekend pass. Children age 7 and under are admitted free with a paying adult. Pit passes for those wanting an up-close look at the teams as they work on their machines are available for an extra \$10.

Leading the charge into Maine is Pro racer Mike Pilotte, of Fall River, Massachusetts. Pilotte swept the Finals last weekend in Rochester, N.H., and has his sights set squarely on the 2019 Pro class championship. His mission to dominate the entire season for Polaris continues at Speedway 95.

Some of the riders to watch in the Pro Lite class include Dalton Jacquier, Tucker Kierstead, Wade Acker and Ryan Dupont. All of these athletes have matured and will be fast all season. Jacquier got off to a strong start in New Hampshire and is going after the Pro Lite title in 2019.

Along with a full slate of action in Pro and Pro Lite, the Dysart's Snocross in Bangor will also include some great action in the Sport, Women and Junior divisions. It takes support classes to fill out any card of racing, and East Coast Snocross is blessed with strong participation across the board.

The Dysart's Snocross will also feature a Trail Stock class for those looking to give snocross a try for the first time.

This is where aggressive trail riders with a desire to compete can test their skills in a safe environment. The weekend will also include races for kids ages 6 to 10 on 120cc machines on a separate, smaller track. The stars of tomorrow's Pro class learn what racing is all about.

This year's annual Dysart's Snocross at Speedway 95 is presented by the Eastern Maine Community College Foundation, raising funds for student programs at one of Maine's finest institutions for higher learning. Last year, EMCC Foundation awarded over \$110,000 in scholarship to students in need. The event is made possible by several gracious local partners, including Bangor Motorsports, Northeast Paving, Chase Toys, Inc., and Darling's Auto.

Speedway 95 is a 1/3-mile paved oval located on the Odlin Road in Hermon, just off Exit 180 on Interstate 95. With a full card of short track stock car racing every Saturday night during the summer season, Speedway 95 has been entertaining central Maine race fans since 1966. Among the highlights

of each season is a visit by the Pro All Stars Series (PASS) North Super Late Models.

East Coast Snocross, presented by Woody's Traction and FXR, is an ISR-affiliated sanctioning body for snowmobile racing in the northeastern United States. ECS maintains a regional circuit intended to keep grassroots snocross racing healthy in this part of the country, while also cultivating new talent for tomorrow's factory-backed national Pro teams.

For more information, please go to [www.eastcoastsnocross.com](http://www.eastcoastsnocross.com).



# THE MASTERS RACING CIRCUIT

## Kaurala Sweeps Debut Race!



**BRILLION, WISCONSIN'S BOB BERGHUIS (LEFT) TOOK 2ND, WHILE NISSULA, MICHIGAN'S TRAVIS KAURALA WON THE MASTERS RACING CIRCUIT TOP GUN AT THE ONTONAGON, MICHIGAN TERRA-X RACE.**

The Midwestern states number one Professional Snowmobile Hillclimber, Travis Kaurala, jump started a new form of snowmobile racing, Terra-X, by winning 4 of 6 classes. After over 25 years of sanctioning snowmobile races, the Mid America Snow and Terrain Expert Racers (MASTERS), held their debut Terra-X race this past Saturday in Ontonagon.

Kaurala needed one of the fastest qualifying times of the day to get into the TOP GUN Class Shoot-out. With Brillion, Wisconsin's, Bob Berghuis, barely beating, Montreal, Wisconsin's, Jordan Wolfe by one-one hundredth of a second in qualifying, Kaurala wasn't even in the shoot-out. That is until Kaurala turned in a 36.26 second run on the mile challenging course. Berghuis's best time in qualifying was 36.70 seconds.

The fans could see by the 2 rounds of qualifying that the Class Shoot-outs were going to be exciting. The times between the top 2 racers to advance to the shoot-out ranged from only 4 seconds, to tenths of a second.

"A mere one second determined whether you advanced to the shoot-out or put the snowmobile on the trailer," commented Jason Kleinschmidt, MASTERS Racing Circuit Vice President. "3 very fast racers in both Pro Open Stock and TOP GUN were eliminated and didn't even get the chance to compete in the 2 sled race shoot-out."

It was in the Class Championship shoot-outs that a small mistake prevented a racer from getting his name into the MASTERS history book of being the first Terra-X Champion. This happened in the 120cc final when the fastest racer in qualify-

ing, Braden Rose of Harvey, Michigan, got off the 'groove' in the first turn of the slalom portion of the course. The 120cc class is the class where children between the ages of 4 and 11 compete.

"That gave (Klayton) Kin the lead. A lead he would not relinquish," remarked MASTERS Racing Official, Jeremy Schmidt.

The race also brought snowmobilers that had never raced before. "That is the intent of Terra-X. It is a form of racing where all ages and all types of sleds can compete. Look at how good 62 year old Larry Madgewick on an old Arctic Cat Jag did!"

Madgewick suffered 2 3-second penalties for not staying within the Tera-X course, yet was only 5 seconds from qualifying for the final in Stock 600.

The Junior class saw what officials call a 'bright' future for the sport and the MASTERS. Wyatt McIntyre of Greenland held off Kaiden Kaurala and Jack Nordang in qualifying and went on to win the class shoot-out. McIntyre missed advancing to the finals in other classes by less than a second and a half.

McIntyre defeated Travis Kaurala to win the Stock 850.

One of the top Sno-Cross racers in the Midwest, and a racer that many predict to be a class winner in the upcoming Mid America Championship Hillclimb (MACH), Wolfe, won the Pro Open Stock shoot-out, holding off Berghuis right to the finish line.

The MASTERS will sanction the MACH at Whealkate Bluff in South Range, MI., on Feb 2nd, and then the Ojibwa Casino WINTERNAIONALS at Whealkate Bluff on Feb 23rd.



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HARVEY MICHIGAN'S BRADEN ROSE (LEFT) TOOK 3RD, WHILE ONTONAGON, MICHIGAN'S KLAYTON KIN (MIDDLE) TOOK 1ST, AND RYLAND ROSE OF HARVEY, TOOK 2ND IN THE 120 CC CLASS AT THE MASTERS NORTH COUNTRY SNOWMOBILE CLUB TERRA-X RACE IN ONTONAGON, MI.

The next MASTERS Terra-X will be at Adventure Mountain in Greenland on March 16th. The final MASTERS Terra-X, where this year's TOP GUN Champion will be crowned will be at Mont du Lac, outside of Duluth, MN. on April 6th.



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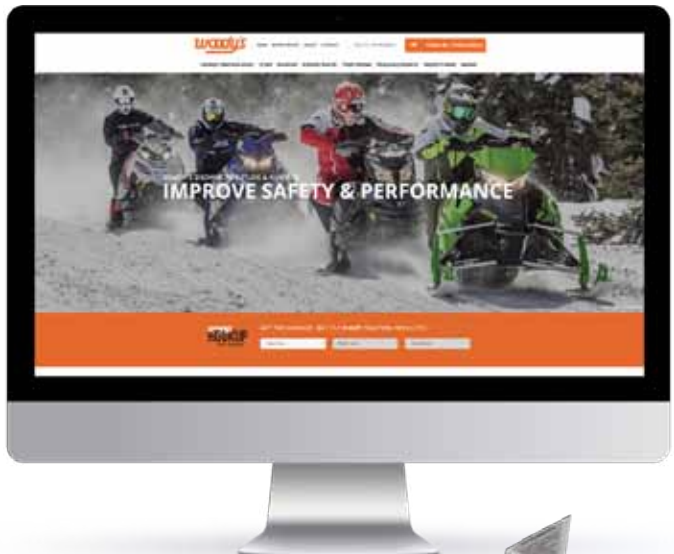
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BRILLION, WISCONSIN'S BOB BERGHUIS (LEFT) ADVANCED TO THE MASTERS RACING CIRCUIT'S PRO OPEN STOCK 'SHOOT-OUT' WHICH WAS WON BY MONTREAL, WISCONSIN'S JORDAN WOLFE (RIGHT).



LEFT: BRILLION'S BOB BERGHUIS (LEFT) AND NISSULA'S TRAVIS KAURALA (RIGHT) IN THE MASTERS RACING CIRCUIT TERRA-X TOP GUN RACE.

## North Country Snowmobile Club Terra-X Results

**SONCO 120cc:** 1) Klayton Kin, Ontonagon, MI., Arctic Cat; 2) Rylan Rose, Harvey, MI., Ski-Doo; 3) Braden Rose, Harvey, MI., Ski-Doo.

**Scott's Superior Inn and Cabins Junior:** 1) Wyatt McIntyre, Greenland, MI., Polaris; 2) Kaiden Kaurala, Nissula, MI., Ski-Doo.

**Rockin' Eagle/ Eagle Country Stock 600:** 1) Travis Kaurala, Nissula, MI., Ski-Doo; 2) Bob Berghuis, Brillion, WI. Polaris.

**JJ's Tackle Shop Stock 850:** 1) Wyatt McIntyre, Greenland, MI., Polaris; 2) Travis Kaurala, Nissula MI., Ski-Doo.

**Domitrovich Insurance Mod 600:** 1) Travis Kaurala, Nissula, MI., Ski-Doo; 2) Bob Berghuis, Brillion, WI. Polaris.

**North Country Snowmobile Club Mod 850:** 1) Travis Kaurala, Nissula, MI., Ski-Doo; 2) Wyatt McIntyre, Greenland MI., Polaris.

**Pat's Motorsports Pro Open Stock:** 1) Jordan Wolfe, Montreal, WI. Polaris; 2) Bob Berghuis, Brillion, WI., Polaris.

**Citizen's State Bank TOP GUN:** 1) Travis Kaurala, Nissula WI., Ski-Doo; 2) Bob Berghuis, Brillion, WI. Polaris.

# THE WINNING EDGE

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# THE WINNING EDGE

## INTERVIEW • LARRY TIEDE

W.E. – Winning Edge Magazine

L.T. – Larry Tiede

W.E. - Tell us about yourself; education, family, employment, hobbies etc.

L.T. - I'm 58 years old. I worked at Airgas Specialty Gas for 18 years and earned a Bachelor Degree in Chemical Engineering before coming to Woody's. I have been with Woody's 19 years. I started as Race Director and now am V.P. of Sales and New Product Development. I have been with my wife, Dona, for 33 years and married for 26 years. We have 5 children Matt, Brandon, Rick, Nikki Lynn and Chelsey and one grandson, Nixon. We enjoy boating and camping.

W.E. - Do you recall your first snowmobiling experience and your first sled?

L.T. - In 1969 my Dad purchased two Yukon King Snowmobiles

from Schmidt Farms, a local dealer. A 15hp Grizzly and 18hp Super Grizzly. I rode every night after school with the neighborhood kids.

W.E. - How and when did you get involved in snowmobile racing? Do you recall your first race, the first sled you ran and how it came about?

L.T. - In 1972, I took classes for snowmobile safety and got my snowmobile safety certificate. When you completed the course and passed, the instructor took us to McDonald Speedway in Pinconning and we got to ride and race around the track. I was hooked. 292 TNT. As time went on we oval raced at McDonalds Oval, St. Charles and a few of the ice carnivals around the area.

W.E. - Beyond your son has anyone or does anyone race in your family? If so, what do or have they raced? What success did they or have they had? Do you or have you raced anything beyond sleds?

DURING JIM MUSSELMANS RETIREMENT PARTY IN 2000 THE DRAG TEAM SHOWED THEIR NEW LINE UP OF GRASS DRAGS SLEDS FOR THE 2000 SEASON. THE FIRST SLED IS A BRAND NEW 1000 POLARIS PRO STOCK. THE SECOND WAS A OPEN MOD WAHL 1000 DRIVEN BY RICH STUMPF FOR LARRY. THE THRID SLED WAS A WAHL 800 CC OPEN MOD . THE FORTH WAS A BRAND NEW LONG TRACK WAHL 1000 CC OPEN MOD.







CRAIG MARCHBANK - LEFT LANE- AND LARRYTIEDE GO HEAD TO HEAD AT THE ALPENA ISR WORLD SERIES OF GRASS.



LARRYTIEDE GIVES SON MATT SOME POINTERS BEFORE HEADING DOWN THE STRIP AT THE MSDRA OPEN 800 CLASS IN MARLETTE, MI.

L.T. - All of my kids have raced snowmobiles in one form or another. Matt raced Jr. drags MSDRA on the ice then raced stock 700 for Anderson Racing on the grass for a couple of seasons. He also raced an 800 Open Mod and a Pro-Stock V-Max 4 on the grass in the MSDRA circuit. Winning Edge put him on the cover once. Nikki Lynn raced grass 440 stock and had a very good SnoCross career racing Jr. 10-12 all the way up to Pro Womens, winning many titles in the WSA and CSRA circuits. Chelsey raced 120's but was more into cheerleading. Brandon and Rick started racing stock 700 and 800 drag for Polaris then moved on to SnoCross. They raced from Jr. 13-14 all the way to semi pro and pro in the WSA and WPSA circuits along with some CSRAA events. They went first and second winning titles every year. Brandon then moved to Florida. Rick continued racing anything he could. Winning overall Heavy Mod and Open Mod at Heydays. Racing ISOC nationals for SnoCross and riding for Schuering Speed Sports one season as a fill-in for injured riders. Drag racing and winning Open 1000 for the Lucus Oil series. All of the kids raced a lot. We started racing drag bikes for a while but it just didn't fit with work and travel.

W.E. - In your HOF Bio you mentioned the fact you began your snowmobile-racing career on the oval. How old were you when you got into it? Number of seasons racing oval track? Type of racing Enduro, sprint etc.... What makes and type of sleds did you race? Record on the oval. Titles, wins and major wins, and career Highlights. Why and when did you leave ovals?

L.T. - Like I said earlier at 12 during safety training we raced about six year's oval. It was hard finding local Jr. classes. It was all sprint type. I left after getting hurt.

W.E. - You were into snowmobile drag racing (ice and Grass) for a number of years. When and How did you get started into drag racing and Why? Do you recall your first drag race?

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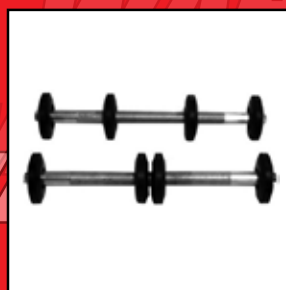
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MATTS TIEDE, SON OF LARRY TIEDE BLASTS DOWN THE STRIP HEADED FOR VICTORY.



LARRY LAYS DOWN THE POWER IN GAYLOND, MI IN THE 1990'S.



GORDY LEE PRESENTS LARRY TIEDE WITH THE 1994 MICHIGAN CUP. HELD IN ONSTED, MI THE MI CUP WAS ONE OF THE TOP GRASS DRAGS IN THE NATION.

When? On what machine, result etc....?

L.T. - First drag race was Tip-Up Town. We took our oval sled up there. It was a 1977 340-Z and it had to race in the 440 class. We didn't win but we had a blast. It was 1981.

W. E. - Please give us a recap of your career; years racing, titles, championships, etc. Machines raced make and models. At what age did you retire and why did you? Do you recall your last race? How did it compare to that first one? Is there any particular race that really stands out in memory on the strip or the oval?

L.T. - I started getting serious around 1983. I purchased a 1978 SRX Yamaha for a stock class. Went all over Michigan racing. Back then there was a drag race every weekend. I met Mike Wasco, who along with a few others started Draper Racing. Six men, seven sleds, we raced all winter for five or six years. When Rob Draper got married the team ended. A year later Mike Dobis called Mike Wasco and I. He worked for Bierlein and they wanted to go drag racing. Bierlein gave us a building, new truck, trailer, and let us build four new Open Mod sleds. It was a dream team. The team dominated Open Mod racing all over North America. After six years I just couldn't give all the time it took and the drive every night to keep helping. I left and started working at home on a new type of chassis along with John Sample and Jim Romano. We built the chassis then went out to Arrow Performance and got a new motor. We raced the sled all winter and won 800 Open and Heavy Mod a few times and even finished 3rd in the Woody's Challenge. That summer Dave Dunigan asked me to drive on the grass for him. Dunigan Racing was always a front-runner on the grass. So off I went, grass racing all over North America. I raced for Dave seven great years winning everywhere we went. Dave was always on the cutting edge with new ideas that we tested and tried. We won at the World Series of ice, Haydays, Snowbash and Marilla. We won them all. It was so exciting. 1996 Brian Musselman was hurt testing with Arctic Cat. Jim and Rob Musselman asked me to come and take over Rob's team. From 1997 to 2003 I ran Open Mod 1000 and 800 and Heavy Mod 1000 and 800. This was during a time when "Open" was king, we would have 20 in a class or more and it took six rounds to win. We had a great sled a super crew and the best support from Robert Musselman and Woody's. MSDRA was our home circuit and we grass raced seven events with them a year. We also traveled everywhere like Haydays, Greys Lake, Snowbash, Marilla and any major event we could do. Three of them years we never lost an 800 final. We won over all Open and Heavy Mod five years in a row. We also won the Hot Sled Shoot Out three times and finished 1st and 2nd once with a second 1000 cc sled.

W.E. - Without giving away any secrets tell us about the after market products you used and how they played a role in your success. Note sled make, chassis, engine(s), clutching, track, belts, carburetors, radiator, electronics, fuel, studs & carbides, etc.

L.T. - We worked with great sponsors. Dave Wahl was always working with us. The Crank Shop supplied motors, Brad Hulings, HRP clutches Klotz Oil and fuel, and of course Woody's Studs.

W.E. - Can you describe the experience hurtling down a strip of grass on a hot summer day at over 100 mph knowing that the grass is not as forgiving as ice if you take in a spill? How would you describe the feeling running on grass vs. ice?

L.T. - Grass on an Open Mod was intense. The whole run there is something happening and you have to be smart at the end of the run. You can't just chop the throttle and let the front end



come down hard. On the ice, the sled leaves so hard but after that it is smooth it seems like you can hear everything and it is so fast.

W.E. - Most people view drag racing as a smooth straight-line event with not a lot of spills. During your career did you have any hair-raising experiences on the ice and grass?

L.T. - On ice at Lewiston, I spit out a cleated track on an Open Mod 1000. The sled kept going straight for a while then the rear started going back and forth. It went sideways and threw me off. I was sliding on my hands and knees until it got too hot. I rolled over on my back and slid to a stop. It melted my flak jak.

W.E. - Your son got into drags when did he start? How long did he race? Who did he race for? What were some of his career highlights? Did he race ice and grass? When and why did he retire from drags?

L.T. - Matt raced MSDRA Jr. then for Shawn Smith of Anderson Racing. He also raced an 800 Open for Woody's. He stopped racing when he went to college. He raced both ice and grass. Rick and Brandon raced both grass and SnoCross.

W.E. - Did you and your son compete against each other? If so, in what formats? What were the results?

L.T. - No we never had that opportunity.

W.E. Did you or Rick ever try asphalt snowmobile racing?

L.T. - Rick worked and tested with Jason Houle when he was working for Straightline Performance. I have not ran down an asphalt track.

W.E. - Tell us about the ice and drag sleds you've raced over the years; make, models, chassis, engines etc. How were they different from the each other Ice vs. Grass? Did you convert any of your ice sleds to grass? What years did you race ice? Why did you focus on grass later in your career?

L.T. - I started out with an 340 Arctic Cat Z and moved onto a Yamaha SRX's (only on the ice). I built a couple Improved Stockers for ice also. My first Open Mod was with Bierlein. It was a 540 motor from Gerard Karmic of FAST in an Anderson chassis for ice only. Next, with Dunigan Racing, it was an all Anderson chassis with many different motor combos for ice and grass. Last, I raced for Woody's and we raced Wahl chassis for many years. We also had a couple of very fast Praline chassis sleds. In the end, my friend Kurt Schultz and I built our own chassis using the best components from Wahl and Praline. In the beginning we would switch them over from ice to grass. As things got faster, we needed to build a sled for each. Ice could be lower, more rigid. I began to travel less later in my career. We raced only grass because the kids were racing SnoCross in the winter.

W.E. - Having raced both grass and ice drags how would you compare the differences in the two formats?

L.T. - Both were fun and very competitive. Grass was nice because people cooked out and stood around and talked. Grass racing never got cancelled. In ice racing it was a 50/50 chance you would have ice.

W.E. - A common misconception is drag racing, especially snowmobile is the feeling it is a two or three man show when it comes to crews. How big was your crew and how much of a role did your crew play in your success? Are there any particu-



LARRY EXPLODES OFF THE LINE AT THE 1994 ALPINE CUP IN GAYLORD, MI.



BUILT BY BRAD HULINGS FOR DAVID DUNIGAN, LARRY RACED THIS SLED FOR THE FIRST TIME AT THE WORLDS SERIES OF ICE DRAGS IN LEWISTON TAKING SECOND IN PRO STOCK 600 AND SECOND IN HEAVY MOD 600.



LARRY CHEWS UP TURF AS HE ROARS DOWN THE STRIP AT THE 1997 MICHIGAN GUP RACES IN ONSTEAD MI.





RICK TIEDE, #75 (LEFT) BATTLES IT OUT AT A SNO-CROSS EVENT IN 2005. TIEDE WAS ONE OF THE TOP YOUNG DRIVERS IN THE REGION AT THE TIME.

lar team members that stand out over the years?

L.T. - We had great crews on all the teams I raced on and that was the key to my success. At Dunigan we always had five or six guys at every race and at Woody's when I came there, Robert had a group of team members that were super. They showed up every night and worked long hours. Everyone had a job and did it. And this may be hard to believe but I'm not always easy to work with, but these guys always showed up. Mitch McCord, Kurt Jodoin and Joey Seckman showed up every night. During the Woody's Team years, I got my good friend Kurt Schultz to help out and come racing with us. Kurt always came thru with a last minute fix to keep us in the winner's circle.

W.E. - Oval, enduro and snow-cross tend to do a partial or total tear down following a weekend of racing. What did your team do with your drag sleds after an event?

L.T. - The sleds were torn down, bored and stroked at major events. Racing Open Mod made teaching easy with the only rules being weight and engine size.

W.E. - There has been talk of bringing in more stock classes and possibly vintage classes to grass and ice drag racing in order to increase entries, bring more people into the sport and cut costs. Have you seen or do you see this coming in the near future?

L.T. - There has been a lot of new events that offer Vintage and entry-level racing. That's a good thing but the problem is they all run different rules.

W.E. - In the late 1980's - early 2,000's grass and ice drags were really big. What happened to that segment of the sport?

L.T. - OEM's moved all their support to SnoCross and as the sleds got faster the cost went up and up. A fairly competitive Pro Stock 1000 is \$40,000 and we open the rules up to allow more things in it. It allowed Pro Stocks to race in Heavy Mod and Open Mod so all those guys quit coming.

W.E. - Did you have any favorite drag strips?

L.T. - Fenwick, ON. Great track, good spectators and the best shut down of any track.

W.E. - You and your sons went into Sno-Cross from 2000-2007. How did that come about? Tell us about the team and the success he had. Did you do any Sno-Cross as a driver? Make sure to note Rick's record in Sno-Cross if possible.

L.T. - Rick, Brandon, and Nikki Lynn all raced SnoCross with great success winning many championships. Between 2000 - 2007 we went SnoCross racing because I had come to work for Woody's as Race Director and we needed to be there learning about the sport.

W.E. - Rick also got into ovals. Tell us about that part of your career and why Rick left.

L.T. - When Rick became Race Director at Woody's, it was important to know all forms of racing. The one he needed to learn was Enduro Racing. He became friends with Don LaBean who had been a sponsor for many teams and they decided to go racing. They put together a good team. And tried using drivers from different forms of racing. They brought in Justin Tate (SnoCross), Shane Felegy (Oval Sprint), Bobby Menne (Cross Country) and Cordell Porter (Oval Sprint). People thought they were crazy. Now they are names that have all done well racing Enduro and at the Soo. I got involved with DL Racing because I just went over there one night to help set up some data loggers. I got caught up in the passion they had and I was there for seven years.



LARRY EXPLODES OFF OF THE LINE IN 1995.



# A LOOK BACK AT THE 2018 GLADWIN VINTAGE RACE #2



ANOTHER BIG TURN OUT OF DRIVERS ALONG WITH SEVERAL ENTRIES WERE ON HAND FOR ROUND TWO. HERE IS A PORTION OF THE GROUP AT THE DRIVERS MEETING.

**By Steve Landon**

Gladwin, Mich., February 10, 2018 - Having enjoyed another huge turn out of racers for the first race of the 2018 season drivers from across the Great Lake returned to the sparkling big blue ice oval at The Historic Gladwin County Fairgrounds for second time this season.

Once again some truly beautiful winter weather greeted fans and drivers for another action packed day of competition. As in the past there was plenty of exciting neck and neck racing in all classes from start to finish. A few heart pounding spills kept fans on the edge of their seats, thankfully beyond their pride and a few broken sled parts no one was seriously injured in any of the mishaps.

Veteran Rupp speedster Ed Williams of Marion, Mich., turned in

another stellar performance with a pair of victories over fellow Rupp ace Eric Williams also of Marion, Mich.

John Wilkosz of Manistee, Mich., continued his success on the Gladwin oval with a pair of wins on his Yamaha.

Don Leddy of Saginaw, Mich., and Nick Givens also turned in a pair of winning performances to close out the day.

In addition to multiple class winners there were several single class victories. Check out the results for details.

The second race of 2018 closed out a fifth year of racing at Gladwin County Fairgrounds. Good old-fashioned winter weather and hard working volunteers once again made the race a total success.

To learn more about the 2019 season check out the Gladwin Vintage Races Ad in this edition and like us on Facebook for all the great history and updates.





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THIS SLED LOOKED GREAT AND RAN STRONG AT THE START, BUT THIS LITTLE SNO-JET'S RUN CAME UP SHORT.



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# *Hail to the Vintage World Champion*

## *Michigan's Brice Pretzel*



BRICE PRETZEL SURROUNDED BY DERBY ROYALTY FOLLOWING HIS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP VICTORY.

**Photos by Theresa Hazard**

**Interview with Brice Pretzel**

**W.E. - Winning Edge Magazine**

**B.P. - Brice Pretzel**

W.E. - Tell us about yourself: Age, education, family, employment, hobbies, etc.

B.P. - I am 23 and I graduated from Greenville High School in 2013. I have one younger sister (19), named Brailee. I am a tig welder at a small fabrication shop in Belding, MI. My hobbies in the off season are trail riding, going to Silver Lake Sand Dunes with the Jeep, camping, waterfowl hunting and anything outdoors.

W.E. - Do you recall your first snowmobiling experience and your first sled?

B.P. - I grew up around snowmobiles, and I think my first snowmobile was an Arctic Cat Kitty Cat when I was 3 or 4.

W.E. - How and when did you get involved in snowmobile racing? Do you recall your first race, the first race sled you ran and how it came about?

B.P. - My dad Brian Pretzel grass dragged for Randy Hazard and that's kind of where it started for me. I think I was 12 years old when I started drag racing and it was a Polaris 800 impropver.

W.E. -- How long have you been oval racing?

B.P. - I started oval racing in 2014 for George Krieger on his 440 Alouette Super Brute, I rode that for 2 years and then in 2016 I started riding for Randy Hazard.

W.E. - Do you race anything beyond snowmobiles? If so what do you race and what kind of success have you had?

B.P. - No I've only ever raced snowmobiles.

W.E. - Does anyone or has anyone raced in your family? If yes what do they or have they raced and what kind of success have they had?

B.P. - Yes. My dad Brian Pretzel has drag raced motorcycles and snowmobiles my whole life. He has set multiple records on Kawasaki H2 motorcycles and in 2015 he was the NHRA prostock snowmobile division 1 points champion!

W.E. - What attracted you to snowmobile racing? Have you ever considered racing current model sleds? If not why?



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TAYLOR BLUNT (FIANCÉ), RIGHT- BRICE PRETZEL TAKE TIME OUT TO DURING THURSDAYS PRACTICE. LITTLE DID TAYLOR KNOW SHE WILL BE A WORLD CHAMPIONS WIFE.

B.P. – Growing up around them played a big role so it was always a big part of my life. Yes I have considered, just never really had a chance to get on one.

W.E. - Beyond the W.C. had you won any class championships at Eagle River in the past? If so, when and what were they?

B.P. – I have won several classes at Eagle River, I honestly don't remember all of them. Several 340 and 440 mod classes.

W.E - Minus the W.C. Final, please give us a recap of your weekend and class finals, qualifying, heats, problems, etc.

B.P. - Throughout the weekend I was in a total of 7 classes. We had a rough start burning down both the 340 and 440. The 340 blew in the heat race so I didn't make that final, and because it blew up, we didn't make the next heat race because we didn't get it back together fast enough. It's hard to remember the actual order, but I blew the 340 in a final and did not finish. So out of the 7 classes entered, I was able to take a 1st place in the Super Mod Liquid 440, a 2nd place in Pro Mod FA 440, a 2nd place in Super Mod FA 440 and a 3rd place in the Super Mod FA 800 class. The weekend started out quite rough but finished as strong as we could.

W.E. – Was this your first serious run for the W.C.? What has kept you back in past years?

B.P. – I have qualified for the W.C. a handful of times, but this year I felt that I had what it took mentally. Even though my sleds had some issues earlier in the weekend, that worked out to



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Design by Sherry Landon, The Winning Edge Magazine





(LEFT) BRICE PRETZEL. (CENTER) JT HAZARD (RANDY'S SON), (RIGHT) RANDY HAZARD CELEBRATE A WELL DESERVED VICTORY. LANE

be a blessing in disguise. We missed out on a couple classes, because of that I was able to focus more on the W.C. I feel like this was the best chance I've ever had to win just because they ran it earlier and on schedule, unlike previous years. I think that doing this, it gave all drivers a good chance both physically and mentally.

W.E. – Was this your first race of the season or did you race in Ironwood before this year's Derby? If so how did you do?

B.P. – Yes, the Eagle River Derby is usually our first race of the season, unless we can squeeze in some practice laps somewhere before.

W.E. - How did your W.C. heat races go? Did you have any problems with your sled prior to the finals or in the heat races that had to be corrected?

B.P. – I think I was first in all my W.C. heat races. Other than

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making a few suspension changes to adjust to the track conditions on Sunday it ran top notch.

W.E. – Considering the mild weather we've had this winter to build ice, how was the track overall considering the number of sleds on the oval for this year's vintage races? Did your team do anything special to prepare you and your sled for the conditions? Did you make any adjustments in your driving style to handle the conditions?

B.P. – I felt like the track held up very well compared to past years. I think because of the mild temperatures the ice was a little softer and didn't break off as easily. The new track owners also did a lot of maintenance to make the track better, and most importantly safer for the drivers.

W.E. -Tell us about the sled you ran this year: Year, make, model. How it compared to others you ran in the W.C.

B.P. – My W.C. sled is a Randy Hazard built 73 Polaris Star Fire. It is actually the same sled that Todd Krikke Ran in 2014 when he took home the World Champion title.

W.E. - Speaking of driving styles how would you compare your style to the others out there in this year's W.C.?

B.P.- My style is a little different than others. I mean anyone that watches me knows I like to start on the outside and dive into the corners. Part of being a good driver is being able to



**Presents.....**

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pick good ice and being able to drive in any condition. Because, like I said, anyone that watches me knows my lines. There are times that people try and take my lines or my starting spot. You just have to learn to be versatile and do your thing no matter what is thrown your way.

W.E. - Please give us a lap - by - lap recap of the W.C. final? Where did you start? How many laps, etc..

B.P. - At the start of the race they called us down by qualifying time and I was the 3rd qualifier and with Matt Goede being out due to his accident, I got the second pick where I wanted to start. It took a few tries to get the first lap in because there were quite a few restarts. After we made a few laps there was a red flag and I restarted in the 6th spot. We then made a couple more laps and there was another red flag and at that restart I started in the 2nd spot, with 4 laps to go I passed Jacob Goede to take over the lead and held the lead to the checkered flag!

W.E. - How does it feel finally to be among the elite group of Vintage World Champions? What was it like seeing that checkered and knowing it was for you?

B.P. - It is a great feeling and a dream come true. It was just crazy seeing the checkered flag and there wasn't anyone in front of me.

W.E. - Do you plan to come back and give it another try in 2020?

B.P. - Oh yeah, we will definitely be back to try going 2 in a row.

W.E. - Without giving away any secrets tell us about the after

market products you use and how they played a role in your success. Note: Clutching, track, belts, radiator, electronics, fuel, studs, carbides etc.

B.P. - We don't really run anything special. OEM Polaris clutches, Camoplast track, Carlisle belt, Sunoco race fuel, Studboy studs and carbides.

W.E. - Living in Belding, MI it must have been green and mild weather wise this season. Did you get in any testing before heading to the Derby?

B.P. - The weather made it tough to get out to test, but we actually didn't fire the sleds until the day before we left for Eagle River!

W.E. - You worked with a couple of Michigan Motor Sports Hall of Famers, Doug Flannery and Todd Krikke. What role did they play in building this sled and helping you lead it to victory? Has Doug built all your past Derby sleds?

B.P. - Todd definitely played a huge role in helping me tune in the suspension and handling issues. Not only is he there in the pit crew, he is there for advice. He helps me pick the good lines, he watches not only me but my opponents as well. He can see things that I can't at times, and this helps me the next time out on the track.

W.E. -- Having had success in enduro, sprint, and vintage has Todd or Doug given you any desire to tackle enduro racing or the modern sled championship at Eagle River?

B.P. - No that's not really something we've ever talked about,

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7. 1984 & Older  
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10. 600 IFS Improved
11. 1984 & Older  
440 Stock Liquid
12. 1984 & Older  
440 Improved
13. 1984 & Older  
340 Liquid Improved
14. 1984 & Older  
440 Pro
15. 1984 & Older  
340 Imp.
16. 1984 & Older  
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440cc Max  
(55 Years and Older)
17. 1984 & Older  
Jr. Class Stock  
340cc Max  
(10-16 Years Old)
18. 1984 & Older  
Single Stock
19. 1984 & Older  
440 Stock
20. 1984 & Older  
340 Pro
21. 1984 & Older  
440 Liquid Improved
22. 1984 340 Liquid Stock
23. 1984 & Older  
Junior Imp. 340cc Max  
(10-16 Years Old)
24. 1984 & Older  
Single Imp.
25. Relic Class  
Single Cylinder Stock  
(no longer in production)
26. Relic Class  
440cc max. Stock  
(no longer in production)
27. Relic Class  
340cc max. Stock  
(no longer in production)



not that there isn't any desire, but it's never been brought up.

W.E. - How much of a role did your crew play in this year's championship?

B.P. - My crew played a huge part in winning this championship, just all the preparations before heading to Eagle River and all the hard work while we were there. From building the sleds, loading the trailers, taking the 8-hour drive to get there, and just everything in the pits, and even the long nights and early mornings at the track to make sure everything is set for race day. I wouldn't be here without any of them.

W.E. - Any final comments?

B.P. - Thank you for giving me the time to do this interview for your magazine, it really means a lot.

W.E. - Please list your sponsors and crewmembers.

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