

PRP Press Release by Chuck Greenslate

For the sixth consecutive year, Portsmouth Raceway Park will host the annual RhinoAg Dirt Track World Championship presented by Optima Batteries.

This tradition-rich, crown jewel of Late Model Dirt Track racing will take place October 19-21 and will once again pay \$100,000 to the winner. The 2017 edition of this iconic three-day event will mark the 37th annual running of the race, and this Carl Short-promoted spectacle on dirt will again serve as the season finale for The Lucas Oil Dirt Car Series.

"This year's DTWC has so much riding on it," said PRP Track Promoter Donna Rayburn. "Less than 100 points separate Tim McCreadie, Josh Richards, and Scott Bloomquist in the Lucas Oil Points.

"As if \$100,000 to win isn't enough, the eight-month long battle for the Lucas Oil championship could come right down to the last lap on October 21st," Rayburn added.

According to Rayburn, Portsmouth area residents, merchants, and especially restaurant owners and managers should be ready for an infusion of race fans that are expected to roll into southern Ohio the week of the race.

"Last year, we had our largest crowd since the DTWC has been here," Rayburn said. "People poured into the track in droves. The weather was fantastic, and so was the racing."

Brandon Sheppard of Berlin, IL took the win last year in the Late Model portion of the DTWC, while Fairmont, WV's Jacob Hawkins prevailed in the \$4,000-to-win Modified Feature. In total, last year's race had 79 Late Models, 85 Modifieds, over 500 RVs in the PRP camping area, and an estimated crowd of 8,000 people in attendance for Saturday night alone.

As was the case last year, this three-day event will kick off on Thursday with Modifieds. Racers in this division will qualify and run their heats. Modified B-Mains and a non-qualifiers race will also take place Thursday.

The Lucas Oil Late Models will hit the track Friday for their heat races. Each driver will compete in a pair of heats, in which passing points will be used to determine Saturday's lineup for the A-Main and B-Mains. Last year, PRP fans witnessed 16 total Late Model Heat races during the Friday portion of the program.

Also Friday, the Ohio Valley Roofers Legends Car Series will be in action.

Besides the Late Model A-Main and B-Mains, Saturday will also present The Jim

Dunn Memorial Non-Qualifiers Late Model race and the Modified Feature.

For added fun, this year's DTWC will also feature a throwback theme, much like NASCAR has done at Darlington over the past few years. According to Rayburn, Scott Bloomquist will sport number 18, as he was early on his career, and Jonathan Davenport will be in a car painted up to look like Mike Duvall's "Flintstone Flyer". Audie Swartz will have a paint scheme like his father Charlie's car from back in the 1980s.

General admission and pit gates will both open at 2 p.m. each day of the event.

HISTORY OF THE DTWC

The DTWC has had 24 winners over the last 36 years. Brandon Sheppard and Scott Bloomquist have enjoyed the most success in recent years. Sheppard won it in 2013 and 2016. Bloomquist, -time winner of the race, prevailed in 2014 and 2015.

From 1999 through 2013, the race had 14 different winners in 15 years.

Freddy Smith is a five-time DTWC winner, which is the most of any driver. The late Jim Dunn won the first one in 1981.

Five different Ohioans have won the race and four different Kentuckians.

FAN ACCOMODATIONS and NOTES

Parking is free. Handicap parking is available near the General Admission gate. A shuttle will run through the parking and camping areas to give rides to and from the gates. The front row of the grandstands be left open for Handicap/Disabled persons.

When leaving the parking area at the end of the night, only right turns will be permissible at the tops of the ramps. This greatly helps with the flow of traffic. When leaving PRP, take the ramp on the left to turn back in to Portsmouth, or take the ramp on the right to go the opposite direction.

ONLINE INFORMATION

Fans wishing to learn more about the 2017 DTWC can visit the official Dirt Track World Championship website at www.thedtwc.com, The Lucas Oil Dirt Car Series website at www.lucasdirt.com, or the Portsmouth Raceway Park website at www.portsraceway.com.

PRP HISTORY AND 2017 RECAP

Portsmouth Raceway Park is owned by The Coleman Family of West Portsmouth. Tim Coleman constructed the track in 1990, and the first full season of racing took place in 1991. The track itself has underwent two major renovations during its 27-year history. It was slightly expanded from a quarter-mile bullring in the mid-90s and in 2000 it was reconfigured into the 3/8-mile track that it is today.

In 2017, Wheelersburg Late Model driver Josh Bocook captured his first-ever PRP track championship. As a result, he will have a provisional starting spot in this season's DTWC. Kite, KY's Brandon Fouts will also have provisional for winning the annual Boone Coleman Memorial "Gator 50".

Lucasville's Jeremy Rayburn won the track championship in the Modifieds. Portsmouth's Billy Staker and Stout's Derek Richmond captured titles in the Limited Lates and Sport Mods respectively.