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Norm, Susan, Steve and Paul after an exciting race day

NASAAZ summer events are always exciting as we try to beat the heat by starting at daylight and wrapping up by noon. Track temps. rise quickly making it a challenge as the traction and tire temps become a factor. June 4-5 was no exception, with a qualifying race on Saturday and race on Sunday. The field was literally reversed more than once with great racing and a little bit of drama too.

944 spec at Impound

Saturday Qualifying Race had 6 spec 944s and 1 spec rx7. Norman Hamden (99) had set the fastest time in qualifying besting Griffith (7) by a mere .05 seconds. Unfortunately for Norm, an off track excursion (4 tires off) was reported and he would be starting in the back. Starting order: Girffith (7), Paluch (94), Hauck (8), Marlow (47x), Seiferth (011) rx7, Wonjar (123), Hamden (99). As the pace car exited the track Griffith had a brain fart and thought another warm up lap was in order. As Paluch tried to take his position for the start there was minor contact with Griffith who was still in warm-up mode and not in position. Finally a lap later the group was gridded up and took the green. Hamden was pretty far back from the group after the confusion but managed to get a run on the start making three passes. (More on that later!) Lap three running order: Griffith, Paluch, Hauck, Hamden, Marlow, Wonjar, Seiferth. By lap 6 Wonjar was able to overtake Marlow as Hamden was all over Hauck and made the pass on lap 8. By now 1st Griffith had a pretty good gap on 2nd Paluch who also had a good gap on 3rd Hamden.

Jeff Wojnar Trailing Dave Hauck

4th Hauck was giving it hell trying to get his position back from Hamden, but ended up with a spin in lap 11 for his efforts, losing his 4th place position to Wonjar. The feild remained the same until the finish: Girffith (7), Paluch (94), Hamden (99), Wonjar (123), Hauck (8), Marlow (47x), Seiferth (011) rx7.

Race Director Jeff Sussman and Race Tech Chief Jim Fluckey coming to lay down the law!

Now for the drama! The goof up at the start, and incident with Griffith and Paluch resulted in a penalty, putting both in the back for the start of Sundays race. Oh, and the great start by Hamden?? It was a little too great, as he was rewarded with a start from the back for Sundays race also, but still in front of Griffith and Paluch.

"So we are all starting the back?"

Sunday Race Start heading to the Green

Sunday Race: Jeff Wonjar (123) takes the pole with Dave Hauck (08) joining him on the front row. The rest of the field: Steve Marlow (47x), Paul Sieferth (011) rx7, Norman Hamden (99), Joe Paluch (94), Darren Griffith (7) gridded up nicely as the pace car exited the track. It was bound to be an exiting start as the fastest qualifiers from Saturday were all in the back. Hamden would not dissapoint! As the green flag flew, so did Hamden. The pace lap was a little quicker than usual so Hamden decided to shift into 3rd earlier than normal and it paid off. He went to the inside of the field getting pinched by cars in front trying to make their own passes. A nice dust cloud covered the entire front straight as Hamden went 2 tires off passing all the way up to 3rd! Hauck made the pass on Wonjar for the lead. Haucks lead would be short lived as Hamden got by before the end of the lap.

Hamden in lead already

Paluch setting up Marlow for a pass for 5th

Griffith sliced his way through the field ending up in 3rd by lap 2 and Paluch got up to 5th behind Wonjar by lap 3. By lap 6 Griffith, after a fierce battle with Hauck, took over 2nd. Lap 7 running order: Norman Hamden (99), Darren Griffith (7), Dave Hauck (08), Jeff Wonjar (123), Joe Paluch (94), Steve Marlow (47x), Paul Sieferth (011) rx7. The most exciting race at this point was between Paluch and Wonjar as the rest of the field had spread out. On lap 9, Paluch attempted a pass on Wonjar on the main straight. As they approached the 'chicane' they were two wide, or maybe 'too' wide! There was no contact but Paluch ended up backwards in the dirt securing 4th place for Wonjar and improving Marlows position.

Wojar chasing down Hauck for 3rd

When the dust settled it was: 1st Norman Hamden (99), 2nd Darren Griffith (7), 3rd Dave Hauck (08), 4th Jeff Wonjar (123), 5th Steve Marlow (47x), 6th Joe Paluch (94), 7th (1st rx7) Paul Sieferth (011) rx7.

Storming Norman Hamden takes the win!

Honorable mention goes out to Steve Marlow (47x) who purchased Austin Newmarks old car and is still dialing in the set up. Marlows lap times improved by 3 seconds over the weekend. After a bad start to the race his fast lap time was just faster than 3rd place finisher Dave Hauck. Next race should be good for Marlow. Also, Paul Sieferth (011) rx7 the lone rx7 joining us. He drove clean and had fun. It looks like some of his compadres will be joining in the fun soon to give him some competition!

Joe, Steve, and Jeff discuss the pass attempt and spin

"Its all good!"

Jeff Wojar taking a breath after a hard fought 4th