



Speedway gets back to stock car races

By DARIN RACEK
Special to The Telegram

Elmwood Park Speedway was able to get back to racing after a week off with several inches of rain. Actually, nearly .7 inches fell in Norton in the morning, but the sun and wind dried it out enough that more water was put on before rolling the track. Darren Berry of McCook, Jerry Teel and Cody Graham of Hays, Jay Hachmeister of Lenora, and Wade Wagenblast of Deshler, Neb. were able to dodge the rolling cars and rolled into victory lane.

The final race of the night was the twenty lap IMCA Stock Car A Feature, and the drivers put on an exciting show for the first 16 caution-free laps. Jay Hachmeister passed heat winner Chase Conaway of Smith Center on lap five and began to set the pace. Before too long, Dustin McClurg of Logan and Cory Struckhoff of Kensington began closing in on him, and the battle would ensue. On the 16th lap, McClurg nearly got underneath the Lenora driver in corner two, but would come short of the lead. On the next lap, McClurg tried the same move in the same spot. At the same time, Struckhoff tried the same move on McClurg, and the three cars tried to go three wide on the bottom third of the track. Struckhoff spun, bringing out the yellow. On

the restart, Norton driver Jason Davis tried to apply the pressure up front. After moving into third place on the high side going into corner three, he decided to cut low, which crossed the path of McClurg, and sent Davis into the air and down with a flat tire, bringing out the yellow flag again. After one more yellow on lap 17, McClurg again pursued the lead from Hachmeister. While he could get alongside Jay, he could not take the lead from him and deny Hachmeister the A Feature win. Pat Bedore of Stockton stayed out of trouble and earned a third place finish. Struckhoff came from the back in the last four laps to finish in fourth, while Conaway finished in fifth place. The other Stock Car heat was won by Brandon Clough of Wallace, Neb.

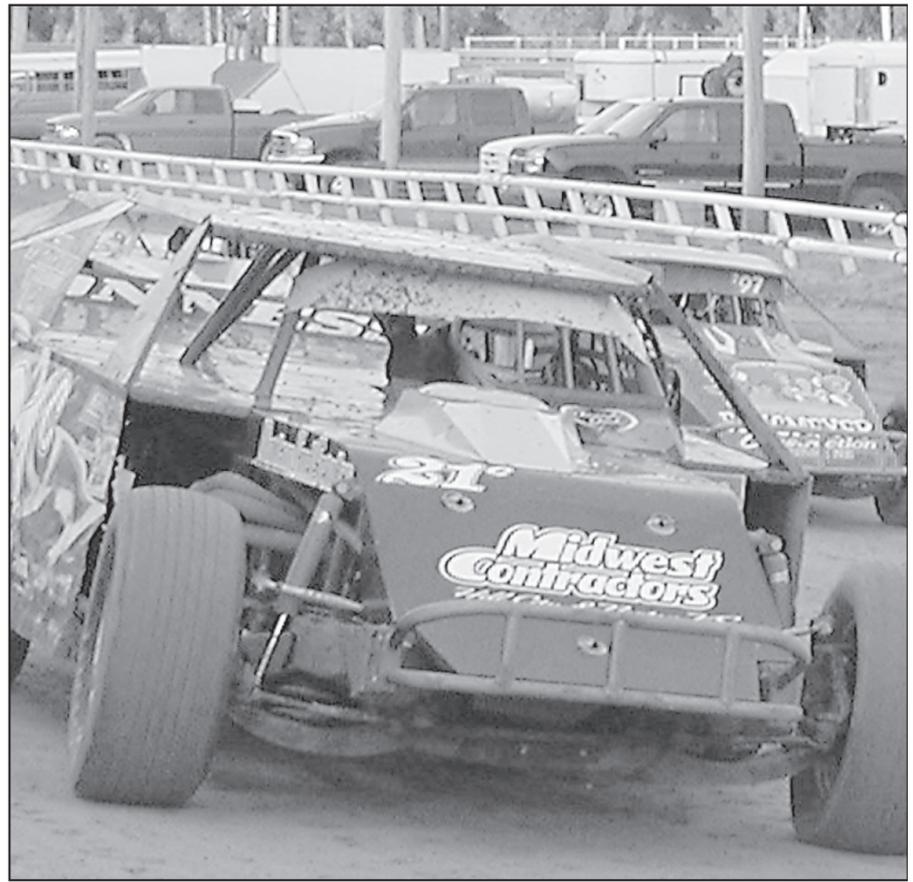
Shelby Stapel of Garden City had sights on his first A Feature win, as he paced the 305 Sprint Cars for the third quarter of the race. On that lap, however, his car slipped out of gear and slowed on the back straight. The yellow came out, and that handed the lead over to Darren Berry. Berry would lead the remainder of the race unabated for his first Feature win of the year. Bill Hays of Edison, Neb. held a late-charging Randy Bantam off for second place. Stapel did finish in fourth, ahead of Howard Van Dyke of Clay Center.

Berry and Bantam were the heat race winners. Youngster Garth Griffith of Atwood had a scary roll in the heat races but did not appear as injured as his car, which could not be fixed in time for the main event.

Jerry Teel led all 12 laps of the IMCA Modified A Feature, but a simple sentence does not define the effort made in winning the event. He had to hold off Norton driver Rick Schwab and Beloit drivers Brian Calhoun and Tim Watts to earn the win. The other three drivers shuffled around in second spot, and at the end, heat winner Calhoun had the spot. Schwab finished in third place, while Watts was at the rear for fourth.

Heat winner Cody Graham and Kelly Karnopp of Norton were pacing the IMCA Hobby Stock A Feature until lap seven of the event. Graham slipped up high in corner one, which appeared to open the door for Karnopp. However, at the same time Karnopp tried to make the pass, a rear axle broke in his car, sending a tire flying and Kelly and his car into a nasty barrel roll.

Karnopp was able to get out of the car on his own, but would probably be very sore on Sunday morning. When the race resumed, Graham resumed the lead and held Jerry Hudson of Kensington



The Elmwood Park Speedway held their fourth race of the season on June 19 in Elmwood Park. The next race is scheduled for July 10.

—Telegram photo by Erica Bradley

at bay for his second win of the year at Elmwood Park.

Dalton Dolan of Oberlin spun early in the race, but came back for third place, and Jason Stephens of McCook was fourth.

Kaid Calhoun of Beloit won the IMCA SportMod heat race and showed the drivers the way around for the first few laps. Wade

Wagenblast had some pushing issues with his car, and he had a difficult time finding a way by.

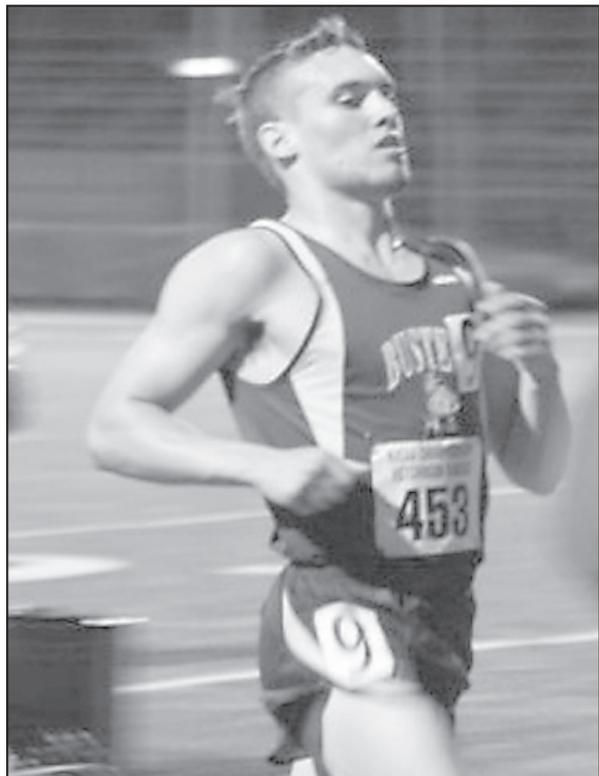
On lap five, Brian Conness of WaKeeney went underneath both cars to earn the lead. Wagenblast followed, then made a move of his own on lap seven that had him out front.

He steered the car around the

track in a way that kept him ahead for five more laps, earning the win. Conness and Calhoun were followed by Tyler Watts of Beloit at the finish.

The next night of racing at Elmwood Park Speedway will be July 10. The gates open at 5 p.m., and the races start at 7 p.m.

Norton distance runner making progress in college



Norton's Zach Bainter, running for Garden City Community College, strided across the finish line to complete the 10,000 meter run in the National Junior College Athletic Association Track and Field Championships on May 20 in Hutchinson. — Courtesy photo

By DICK BOYD

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Zach Bainter, who was a premier distance runner for Norton Community High School, continues to progress in his transition to college running.

As a freshman at Garden City Community College this past season, he was a member of the Busters' regional champion and third place nationally cross country team and his determination caused him to continue to improve in the spring.

He was slowed somewhat after hitting a knee on a hurdle and falling during the 3,000 meter steeplechase in the 2010 Alex Francis Classic at Fort Hays State University on March 26.

Despite the incident, he got back on his feet and finished the race in 10:54.93 for an eighth place.

One week later, Zach had recovered enough from the knee injury to place third in the 1500 meter run in the Hutch Night Relays in Hutchinson with a time of 4:20.14.

He was also a member of the Busters' 4 x 1600 meter relay team which placed third in 18:52.35.

Next, he competed in the 5,000 meter run in the K.T. Woodman Invitational at Wichita State University.

Zach placed 16th overall with a time of 15:47.07, which was second best for Garden City.

The National Junior College Athletic Association Track and Field Championships were held on May 20 in Hutchinson and Zach competed in the 10,000 meter run for the first time ever.

Again, he was up to the challenge and placed 15th nationally with a clocking of 32:56.53.

He had the second fastest time for a Garden City runner. His teammate placed 13th.

During the cross country season, Zach's coach Dan Delgado nicknamed him "Farm Dog" Bainter and entered him in several races under that name.

"He knew I came from a farm and was working hard and never quitting so he gave me that nickname," said Zach.

Needless to say, Coach Del-

gado is very satisfied with his "farm boy's" progress in his first full track season at Garden City.

"Zach is the hardest working athlete I have ever coached and I have coached some monsters," said the coach recently.

"His work ethic and the faith he put into Buster Cross Country and Track will pay dividends this fall.

"Zach has caught up to our top runners and, the way he is going, it is a matter of time before he surpasses them. That time is much sooner than one realizes. Day in and day out, Zach understood the phrase 'train in hills, heat and at high-cardio, if you dare to be great'. He sure wasn't daring to be less.

"Zach holds the highest grade point average on the team in addition to having the highest work ethic.

"I am not a genius by any means but, one thing I know, some people are afraid of success and won't risk failure. Zach is not afraid of failure and he is not afraid of success and that makes for an All-American. Time will tell!"

Zach was a 2009 state champion in both wrestling and track at Norton Community High School.

He was a state champion in both the 3200 meter and 1600 meter runs and missed a third state gold medal by .08 of a second in the 800 meter run.

Zach's 3200 meter winning time of 9:48.13 in the state meet in Wichita was also a new Norton school record!

Zach is the son of Vicki and David Bainter. His grandparents are Rose and Bill Bainter and Frieda and Bernie Goetze and Victor Ritter.

Runner competes at K-State

By DICK BOYD

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Laura Lee Baird, a former record-setting distance runner for Norton Community High School, has just completed her freshman season as a runner for Kansas State University.

Highlights of her first season were winning the 1500 meter run in the prestigious K.U. Relays in Lawrence in 4:43 and setting a 4.35 personal record for the same distance in the University of Nebraska Open in Lincoln, Neb.

"She struggled with anemia and had low iron levels but that has been corrected," said K-State head cross country and assistant track and field coach Michael Smith.

"She's made significant improvement and she's training hard.

"We have her in the weight room so she will be able to tolerate more training. She has good leg speed.

"We expect her to be Big 12 competitive next season and ad-

vance beyond.

"Laura Lee is a very coachable girl. She's learning how to run. She's figuring out how to follow and challenge.

"At the end of this season, she was getting more and more competitive. If she keeps going in this direction, it will maximize her potential.

"We expect her to run under 4:35 for the 1500 next season.

"Laura Lee qualified to compete in the upcoming USA Junior National Championships for athletes 19 and under but that would have been extra training for that competition and she decided to concentrate on getting ready for cross country this fall."

Laura Lee holds two school records at Norton Community High School. She set the 800 meter record of 2:19.15 in 2008 and the 1600 meter run school mark of 5:17.50 in 2009.

She is the daughter of Leslie and Jim Baird and granddaughter of Ruth Hartman and Betty Baird.



Laura Lee Baird, Norton Community High School's outstanding distance runner, changed uniforms this year after graduation. She is shown here competing as a freshman for Kansas State University during the KSU Indoor Meet. — Courtesy photo

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