



## **Gurnee, IL - July 28th, 2011, NASA Great Lakes.**

With the weather very hot, the NASA Great Lakes Region Spec E30's began the July 16-17, 2011 weekend at Mid Ohio Raceway (pro course) with drivers John Ackerman, Cameron Bullard, Robert Grace, Jeremy Lucas, Anthony Magagnoli, Michael Osborne, Kyle Smith and Rob Thornton. Great Lakes Region Spec E30 group was pleased to have a visitor from the Mid Atlantic Region, Robert Grace, who came to Mid Ohio for the first time in preparation for Nationals this coming September. The Spec E30 group would like to congratulate John Ackerman (who debuted with the group at Grattan Raceway in June) and his wife on the upcoming birth of their daughter, who should arrive just in time for Nationals in September.

Saturday morning featured the standard 20 minute practice session, where Osborne broke a rocker arm on the first lap. He spent the balance of the morning replacing it and had the car ready in time for qualifying. The fifteen minute qualifying session resulted in Magagnoli earning the pole with a 1:44.429 followed by Bullard then Lucas, Osborne, Smith, Grace, Thornton and Ackerman.

With a few hours between qualifying and race time, the Spec E30 group decided to do some unofficial tech checks on their cars as an added precaution to prevent anyone in the group inadvertently being disqualified during Nationals. They checked track width and diff lockup on most of the cars present. A few of the cars were borderline with diff lockup.

Race #1 held Saturday late afternoon had Magagnoli at the pole with Bullard beside him as the green flag appeared. Grace moved quickly from fifth to third down the back straightaway. However, Grace entered turn one a little hot on the first lap and went off the track which dropped him back to fifth or sixth. Bullard later took the lead from Magagnoli when they caught slower traffic. Magagnoli then retook the lead after Magagnoli pressured Bullard into making a mistake and running off track at turn one. Osborne moved to third as Grace dropped back. On the last lap Osborne seeing Lucas close behind tried a risky pass on Bullard to the inside which resulted in some racing contact that spun Osborne off the track and allowed Lucas to take third. The race ended with Magagnoli first, Bullard second, Lucas a close third, then in order Osborne, Grace, Smith, Thornton and Ackerman. Sunday morning found the track fogged in with very limited visibility. All three race groups had their practice sessions canceled. Visibility improved and qualifying was held as scheduled. Grace earned the pole for the Sunday race with a 1:45.199 followed by Bullard, Magagnoli, Osborne, Lucas, Smith, Thornton and Ackerman.



The green waved for the Sunday race with Grace at the pole. The first five cars raced bumper to bumper for the first few laps. Grace held onto the lead for about three laps before Magagnoli was able to capitalize and make a pass and take the lead. As Grace lost a little ground Bullard was able to move up to 2nd. Magagnoli and Bullard were bumper to bumper for awhile until Bullard spun entering Thunder Valley. Lucas took Bullard's place to pressure Magagnoli. Smith had electrical or mechanical problems and left the track about half way through the race. As the checker flag waved Magagnoli was first, Lucas second, Grace third followed by Osborne, Bullard, Thornton, Ackerman and Smith.

The next two events are scheduled for Mid Ohio. So far 8 or 9 drivers have signed up for August and 25 or so for the Nationals in September. Track space and motel rooms are going fast so if you are interested in any of these events, I recommend signing up soon and making motel reservations if needed.

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