



Sobczak Sweeps NLSA Finale as Bernard Earns 2009 Inaugural Championship

Greg Cybulski, WINNIPEG, MB (September 22, 2009) Perfection was the word of the day as Dave Sobczak won both his heat race and the feature race to close out the Northern Lightning Sprint Association's inaugural racing season. The #17 Sprint was hooked up as Sobczak turned in a dominating performance on Saturday afternoon's season finale at Red River Co-op Speedway.

In the only 8 lap heat race, front-runners Roland Bernard and Darren Pallen lead the field of 9 cars with Sobczak starting right behind in third place. When the green flag waved, Pallen took the early lead going into the first turn. Two laps was all it would take for Sobczak to pass Bernard and Pallen. With nothing but free air in front of him, Dave Sobczak increased his lead and never looked back as he took his first checkered flag of the afternoon.

The front of the field was not where all the action was happening as Chris Unrau worked his way up from his seventh place starting position to earn a fourth place finish in the heat race.

Starting from the pole position of the 15 lap feature, Dave Sobczak dominated in similar fashion, steadily distancing himself from the other competitors. The biggest battle of the afternoon mirrored the entire 2009 NLSA season as Roland Bernard challenged Daren Pallen for second spot. Bernard dogged Pallen throughout the feature in a classic battle which went to the wire before Bernard successfully edged out Pallen at the finish line to steal second place.

Jennifer Carlson and Estevan, Saskatchewan racer Allan Dayman both charged up the field by three positions during the feature. Starting in seventh, Carlson earned a fourth place finish, while Dayman earned sixth place after starting at the tail of the field in ninth.

Rounding up the top five was Dave Sobczak, Roland Bernard, Darren Pallen, Jennifer Carlson and Bob Charney.

Roland Bernard may have lost the battle, but on this day he won the war. The Northern Lightning Sprint Association's 2009 inaugural Champion was the model of consistency, hard work and determination. There was never a race that the driver of the #2 Lightning Sprint was not competitive in. If Roland Bernard was not in Victory Lane, he finished in the top 3 almost every night and displayed good sportsmanship on and off the track.

"I want to thank all of my friends, family and sponsors for their support in making this season truly special." commented Bernard, who also credits much of his success to his crew chief Marc Goovaerts. "Marc is the heart of this team and he makes my job easier each and every race day."

The 2009 NLSA Champion also shared his thoughts about the organization following it's inaugural season. "I want to thank all the drivers who helped make the NLSA season a success. I would also like to thank President Darren Pallen for bringing the Lightning Sprints to Winnipeg. Darren has done an amazing job of promoting this class and racing in general."

Bernard served notice that he will be returning next season in an attempt to repeat his championship run. With the growing level of competition in the Lightning Sprint class, this will not be an easy task for the "Blue 2 Crew". During the offseason, teams will be busy preparing their cars for the spring of 2010. Lessons learned from 2009 will fuel their desire to improve and to challenge the reigning NLSA Champion.

When the green flag waves at Red River Co-op Speedway for the first race of the new season, the next chapter will begin for the Northern Lightning Sprint Association.

Northern Lightning Sprint Association
Red River Co-op Speedway, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Saturday, September 19, 2009

Heat

1. 17 Dave Sobczak
2. 11 Darren Pallen
3. 2 Roland Bernard
4. 27 Chris Unrau
5. 10 Amber Balcaen
6. 3X Bob Charney
7. 6 Jennifer Carlson
8. 4C Chris Bouwman
9. 2AWD Allan Dayman

Feature

1. 17 Dave Sobczak
2. 2 Roland Bernard
3. 11 Darren Pallen
4. 6 Jennifer Carlson
5. 3X Bob Charney
6. 2AWD Allan Dayman
7. 10 Amber Balcaen
8. 27 Chris Unrau
9. 4C Chris Bouwman

Final 2009 Northern Lightning Sprint Association Points

1. Roland Bernard 366
2. Darren Pallen 357
3. Dave Sobczak 346
4. Jennifer Carlson 334
5. Amber Balcaen 332
6. Bob Charney 274
7. Eric Guyot 230
8. Chris Unrau 228
9. Bob Saindon 219
10. Tyson Hiebert 204
11. Chris Bouwman 165
12. Allan Dayman 106
13. Richard Rogers 48
14. Jeff Laurin 43

About the Northern Lightning Sprint Association:

Created in September of 2008, the Northern Lightning Sprint Association is a rapidly growing organization committed to the creation and maintenance of safe, fast, fun, and affordable open wheel racing. Many of the organization's members are dedicated to helping charities such as the Children's Hospital Foundation and Cancer Care of Manitoba. More information can be found at www.nlsprints.com