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## BILSTEIN MODIFIED LITE STARS SHINE AT 4<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL WINTER NATIONALS BABBITT – WALLING – FRITTER – SMITH FEATURE WINNERS

### ROD JONES NXS #21L WINS CHAMPIONSHIP

SOMERSET, PA: Mother Nature repaid the Bilstein Modified Lite STARS drivers with perfect weather for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Bilstein Mod Lite STARS Winter Nationals. Last year, rain kept the Mod Lite STARS from hitting the Bubba Raceway Park famed 3/8 mile dirt oval for the first two nights providing the STARS leadership with a unique challenge. A decision was made to provide the drivers with three feature races on Saturday which paid out more than \$13,700. 2017 saw a record breaking car count and provided the Bilstein Modified Lite STARS with bragging rights securing the highest car count during the Florida winter nationals. The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Nationals continued breaking records with more than \$25,000 of cash and products awarded to the Mod Lite STARS drivers, a \$4,000 increase over last year, said Modified Lite STARS President of Competition and Racing Operations Bill Bauer.

### Wednesday Night Program February 14<sup>th</sup>

With more than 45 cars in the pits, STARS Director Jimmy May headed his team for pre-race technical inspection which identified minor discrepancies, most of which related to misalignment and measurement from the frame rail to brake rotor. Several rounds of practice took place Wednesday night which saw Pleasant Hill, MO #47 Ed Griggs set fast time with a 16.702 (75.440 mph). Ed was also the winner of the Hoosier Tire driver meeting drawing.

Wednesday night was scheduled for open practice and three rounds of qualification but after talking with the drivers, STARS and USAC officials agreed to move qualifying to each day which supported those drivers who were not in attendance Wednesday.

## Thursday Night Program February 15<sup>th</sup>

### COREY BABBITT DOMENTATES NIGHT #1 BILSTEIN MODIFIED LITE STARS WINTER NATIONALS

With perfect Florida weather and 48 mod lites sighed into the pits, qualification took place which set the line up for four heat races with the top four finishers heading to the “\$500 to win A Main” and the remainder heading to the “B’s”.

NXS #21L West Middlesex, PA driver Rod Jones who set fast time with a 16.455 during qualifications took the outside poll position next to the #12 Corey Babbitt who was sitting in the number one starting position after winning his preliminary heat race. A full field of 24 cars took to the track for Night #1 of the Bilstein Modified Lite STARS Winter Nationals, which saw Jones taking the top spot on the opening lap. For the first five laps both Jones and Babbitt battled for position with the caution flag waving on lap-6 for the #14B D. Bass, #41B B. Bass, and #5J Henry. With a double file restart Jones was able to get the advantage keeping the lead. Babbitt, who had been changing his corner entry into turn two, was able to power around the #21L of Jones on the outside. With laps counting down, Babbitt was able to pull from the field winning night #1 of the Nationals.

**Bilstein Modified Lite STARS Feature Night #1: Winner Corey Babbitt**, William Veach Jr., Rod Jones, Tracy Fritter, Vivian Jones, Josh Baldwin, Ed Griggs (**Hard Charger**), John Pitts, Randy Bryan, Mark Marcucci, Ryan Saffell, Darren Bass, James Hill, Tyler Riggs, Clint Moorehouse, Chris Robinson, Bo Bass, Jason Tretheway, Bryan Henry, Joel Huggins, Mitch Ward, Geoff Youngblood, Reece Shelton, Joe Glick

#### **RACE RECAP**

**Winner:** Corey Babbitt

**Lead Changes:** 2

**Lap Leaders:** 1-6 Rod Jones, 7-20 Corey Babbitt

**# Cautions:** 4

**Hoosier Tire Hard Charger:** #47 Ed Griggs, (9 positions started 16th finished 7th)

**Swift Spring Move of the Race:** Corey Babbitt, Turn 2 pass

**Driver Meeting Hoosier Tire Winner:** Mike Walling

#### **Heat Winners:**

Corey Babbitt, Rod Jones, Josh Baldwin, Geoff Youngblood

#### **B Main winners:**

Darren Bass, Mitch Ward

## Friday Night Program February 16th

### MIKE WALLING LEADS EVERY LAP WINS NIGHT #2 BILSTEIN MODIFIED LITE STARS WINTER NATIONALS

Top Texas Mod Lite STARS driver Mike Walling returned to Bubba Raceway Park Friday night with an avenges after a disappointing Thursday night performance when his motor failed during his qualifying heat race. "I needed this win" Walling stated. Not only did the #29 lead every lap of the 20-lap feature, Walling picked up an additional \$200 Eliminator Bonus for leading every lap.

Friday night kicked off with 48 cars taking time on the difficult 3/8<sup>th</sup> mile egg shape overall which saw feature winner Mike Walling setting fast time with a 17.035 placing him on the pole for the 20-lap feature. With green flag flying Walling took a commanding lead over the field only to have the yellow displayed for the spinning #21 of Derrick Hubbard. With the green flag in the air and the #29 checked out, fans had their eyes on team mates #21L of Rod Jones and the #8M Mark Marcucci, both were side-by-side swapping the number two spot. The #14B Florida driver Darren Bass was patiently waiting to make his move only to get around Marcucci with a few laps remaining. Walling took the checkered followed by Jones, D. Bass and Marcucci.

**Bilstein Modified Lite STARS Feature Night #2: Winner Mike Walling,** Rod Jones, Darren Bass, Mark Marcucci, James Hill, Josh Baldwin, Randy Bryan, Tracy Fritter, Ryan Saffell, William Veach Jr., Ed Griggs, Derrick Hubbard, Austin Martin, Jason Bahrs, Chris Robinson, Jason Tretheway, Reece Shelton, Larry Hubbard Jr., Alan VanWhy, John Pitts, Corey Babbitt, Joel Huggins, Joe Glick, Matt Ward.

#### **RACE RECAP**

**Winner:** Mike Walling

**Lead Changes:** 0

**Lap Leaders:** 1-20 Mike Walling

**# Cautions:** 3

**Hoosier Tire Hard Charger:** #41 William Veach Jr. (13 positions started 23<sup>rd</sup> finished 10<sup>th</sup>)

**Swift Spring Move of the Race:** #17 Ryan Saffell, Turn 4 recovery

**Driver Meeting Hoosier Tire Winner:** Jason Bahrs

#### **Heat Winners:**

Mike Walling, Tracy Fritter, Josh Baldwin, Rod Jones

#### **B Main winners:**

## **Saturday Night Program February 17th**

### **TRACY FRITTER WINS \$1,000 FINAL NIGHT! NIGHT #3 BILSTEIN MODIFIED LITE STARS WINTER NATIONALS**

After three nights at the Bubba Raceway Park 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Bilstein Modified Lite STARS, 48 cars were in attendance in hopes to pick up the \$1,000 to win 25-lap national feature event. All the drivers were on their “A” game which was evident throughout the day as the teams were preparing for the final night of racing.

Friday night feature winner Mike Walling continued where he left off setting fast time with a 17.277 quick time and was able to win his heat race putting him on the pole for the 25-lap feature. Zanesville, OH driver Tracey Fritter #59 was starting second followed by Tyler County Speedway champion Josh Baldwin #34N and Mercer Raceway Park champion Mark Marcucci #8M. “We knew at the start that this would be a tough race” STARS Director Bill Bauer stated. “Our drivers have been putting on a good show all week and with the 2017 STARS champion Tyler Riggs starting 6<sup>th</sup> alongside Willie Veach’s #41 and three time STARS National Champion Randy Bryan starting 8th. It’s a who’s who of mod lite racing.

With the green flag flying and three-four wide racing taking place throughout the field on the opening lap, the red flag flew when several cars entering turn three made contact causing many to flip, all drivers were ok but the incident ended the night for the #14B D Bass, #X50 Huggins, # 47 Griggs, #86 Lowe, #12R Shelton, and #97 Martin.

Zanesville, OH driver Tracy Fritter #59 took the lead on the first lap restart holding off #29 Walling and #8M Marcucci. Caution flew once again on lap-4 for the spinning #20 of Brandon Shaw. The cautions tighten the field giving Jones and Riggs the opportunity to put pressure on the #59 veteran. Red flag flew on lap-5 when Delaware International Speedway champion James Hill #1 took a nasty flip at the end of the front stretch. “I’m ok” Hill stated, “It was just racing but my car is destroyed.”

At the restart Fritter found the preferred line and was able to hold off the rest of the field winning the final night in a dominating manner. “I’m too old for this” Fritter stated, who was fighting off the flu and cold

during the Florida speed weeks. Not only did he win the \$1,000, he also picked up an addition \$100 for leading every lap.

**Bilstein Modified Lite STARS Feature Night #3: Winner Tracy Fritter**, Rod Jones, Tyler Riggs, William Veach Jr., Corey Babbitt, Mark Marcucci, Vivian Jones, Randy Bryan, Josh Baldwin, Chris Robinson, Jason Tretheway, John Pitts, Mike Walling, Ryan Saffell, Bryan Henry, James Hill, Darrick Hubbard, Jason Bahrs, Matt Ward, Brandon Shaw, Barren Bass, Ed Griggs, Austin Martin, Corey Lowe, Reece Shelton, Joel Huggins

### **RACE RECAP**

**Winner:** Tracy Fritter

**Lead Changes:** 0

**Lap Leaders:** 1-25 Tracy Fritter

**# Cautions:** 4

**Hoosier Tire Hard Charger:** #21L Rod Jones (16 positions started 18<sup>th</sup> finished 2<sup>nd</sup>)

**Swift Spring Move of the Race:** #1T Jason Tretheway, Turn 3 recovery

**Driver Meeting Hoosier Tire Winner:** Mike Christians

**Eliminator Challenge \$100 Bonus:** Tracy Fritter

**Performance Wiring Hard Luck Award:** Ed Griggs

### **Heat Winners:**

Mike Walling, Tracy Fritter, Josh Baldwin, Mark Marcucci

### **B Main winners:**

Darrick Hubbard, Rod Jones

## **FINAL NIGHT KEITH SMITH #16S WINS BIG! NIGHT #3 BILSTEIN MODIFIED LITE STARS WINTER NATIONALS**

When most drivers would give up with a ill handing race car, Southington, OH driver Keith Smith driving his familiar #16S continued to work hard on his car and found something picking up the much needed speed on the tricky 3/8<sup>th</sup> mile Bubba Raceway Park oval. Smith nearly missing the last qualifying position for the Bilstein Mod Lite STARS Nationals race was able to take the #16S to victory lane winning the \$400 Delaware Auto Exchange feature event Saturday night at the Ocala, Florida track. Starting in the 8th position Smith was able to work through traffic for the non-stop feature race taking the lead on lap-4. Charlie Brown driving the #64 who started on the tail put on the show of the night passing the field and nearly passing Smith for the feature win, “Smith had the speed but I needed one more lap”, Brown stated.

**Bilstein Modified Lite STARS DAE Feature Winner: Keith Smith**, Charlie Brown, Bobby Springer, Duane Williams, Larry Hubbard III, Dawson Fisher, Anthony Lane, Keving Grisham, Bryan Ward, Andrew Smith, Darrick Hubbard Jr., Larry Bevivino, DNS Cody Vail, Mike Kelly, Mike Christians

**RACE RECAP**

**Winner: Keith Smith**

**Lead Changes: 3**

**Lap Leaders:** 1-3 Dawson Fisher, 4-5 Bobby Springer, 6-8 Keith Smith

**# Cautions: 0**

**Hoosier Tire Hard Charger:** #64 Charlie Brown (10 positions started 12<sup>th</sup> finished 2<sup>nd</sup>)

**Swift Spring Move of the Race:** #48JR Bryan Ward, Turn 4 pass

***BILSTEIN MODIFIED LITE STARS  
WINTER NATIONALS TOP 10***

1	317	Rod Jones	\$300
2	316	Tracy Fritter	\$225
3	303	Josh Baldwin	\$200
4	302	William Veach Jr.	\$175
5	299	Corey Babbitt	\$150
6	293	Mark Marcucci	\$125
7	283	Mike Walling	\$100
7	283	Randy Bryan	\$100
9	282	Ryan Saffell	\$100
9	282	Darren Bass	\$100
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			\$1,575

Modified Lite STARS, LLC serving as a national sanctioning body for the mod lite racing class represent more than 350 race teams throughout North America and Canada; the Modified Lite STARS organization serves a fast-growing segment of dirt oval racing motorsports and is recognized as the leader in modified lite racing. In its eleventh year of operation, the Bilstein Modified Lite STARS Series has gained widespread acceptance with its standardized rules and growing sponsorship program.

The Bilstein Modified Lite STARS Series is proudly supported by its major sponsors: **BILSTEIN Shock Absorbers, Hoosier Race Tire, Aero Race Wheels, SWIFT Springs, ROD END Supply, Delaware Auto Exchange, Knepper ATV Repair, Velocity Race Cars, Sidewinder Chassis by SS Racing, Extreme Motorsports, Chasos Motorsports, Jokers Chassis, Edge Racing Chassis, Evolution Chassis.**