

# Francis adds NSW Title to Australian win list

*Goulburn New South Wales, Saturday January 19<sup>th</sup>, report by Grant Woodhams*



**ABOVE : Steve Francis, snapped on the parade lap at Goulburn Speedway, continued on his winning ways later in the evening by claiming the NSW Title. Photo by Graham Mison.**

United States Late Model supremo Steve Francis has continued one of the most dominating performances by a visitor to Australia in any form of motorsport. His win in the New South Wales Late Model Championship at Goulburn Speedway Saturday January 19 was his sixth win from six starts in Feature races in Australia this summer.

Previous to his Goulburn win Francis had won Feature races on all four nights of the Western Australian 'Wild West Tour', and then successfully defended his Australian Championship at Bunbury WA.

Win number six, the NSW Championship, was not without a few challenges for the Ashland Kentucky driver. In his first Heat race of the night Francis was sent rear of field, after he had taken the lead from NSW sedan veteran Ron Pyne. Pyne had spun to the infield after a torrid battle with Francis.

This incident put Francis well down on points, but he recovered to win his remaining two Heats, to qualify on the front row of the Feature with Pyne.

Six qualifying Heats were held with wins going WA's Michael Holmes, Pyne, Nathan Disney, Francis (twice) and defending NSW Champion, the USA's Devin Moran.

With fifteen drivers on hand at the tight Goulburn circuit passing was at a premium, however both Francis and Moran were able to pass on the low and high lines.

The thirty lap Championship Feature was well worth the price of admission, and although Francis cleared as soon as the green lights were on, the battle for the other podium placings continued to the very end.

The initial battle between Pyne and Moran for second was fantastic, and then Moran was again involved in some tremendous Late Model action with Western Australian long distance specialist Holmes, who came on strong late in the race to grab second, only to have Moran recapture the position with only a lap to run.

Several restarts temporarily halted Francis's charge to victory. There were several casualties in the race including Pyne, Jessica Cassidy, David Robertson, Nigel O'Neill, and WA's Jay Cardy.

### **NSW LATE MODEL CHAMPIONSHIP 30 LAPS**

<b><u>Starting Order</u></b>	<b><u>Finished</u></b>
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1 US15 Steve Francis	1 <sup>st</sup>
2 NSW9 Ron Pyne	dnf
3 US99 Devin Moran	2 <sup>nd</sup>
4 NSW11 Nathan Disney	5th
5 WA52 Jay Cardy	dnf
6 WA91 Michael Holmes	3rd
7 NSW51 Michael Hickey	6th
8 NSW101 Nigel O'Neill	dnf
9 NSW4 David Robertson	dnf
10 NSW89 Liam Heaton	8th
11 NSW7 Peter MacPherson	4th
12 NSW20 Jessica Cassidy	dnf
13 NSW33 Jeff Searle	7th

Did not start: NSW65 Barry Kelleher, NSW8 Ben Seery



**ABOVE : Steve Francis working on the engine of the Peter MacPherson car in the pits prior to racing. Photo by Grant Woodhams.**