



Americans dominate NSW Title



ABOVE : NSW Title podium : left to right : 3rd Michael Holmes, 1st Steve Francis, 2nd Devin Moran.

Photo by Mark Whitehead.

For the second season in succession, the NSW Late Model Title has gone the way of an American driver. Last weekend at Goulburn Speedway for the 2012-13 season event, it was Steve Francis who led home fellow countryman and defending NSW Title holder Devin Moran in what was a one-two finish for the American visitors.

Francis, who recently claimed his second consecutive Australian Title, stepped into the USA # 15 car owned by Sydney's Bruce MacKenzie and was on the pace from the get go around the tight confines of the Goulburn Speedway track. After winning two of his three Heat races, Francis qualified on pole position for the NSW Title deciding Feature race. He hit the lead from the outset and was never headed for the

entire 30-lap journey and greeted the chequered flag with a comfortable distance over his nearest rival.

Defending champion Moran, steering the USA # 99 car for the Nicastris Motorsport team, was unable to match it with the more experienced Francis in the Feature race. However, the teenager, who started from position three in the field, still drove strongly to finish in second place on the podium.

Western Australian racer Michael Holmes was the best of the Australians with a third place on the podium. This was a fantastic result for the underrated driver and to finish behind two professionals is nothing to be ashamed of.

Another Western Australian in former V8 Dirt Modified racer Peter MacPherson had a great run. Despite being a late nomination and driving a car that he had just purchased, the Late Model newcomer finished just off the podium in fourth place.

Former NSW Champion Nathan Disney was the best of the NSW-based racers after he finished in fifth. The remaining finishers were made up of Michael Hickey (NSW), newcomer Jeff Searle (NSW), rookie Liam Heaton (NSW) and Nigel O'Neill (NSW).

In what was one of his best performances since stepping into Late Models, former multiple Australian Super Sedan champion Ron Pyne managed to qualify on the outside of the front row in the Feature race after a consistent run through his Heat races. Unfortunately, the Newcastle (NSW) based racer had a bad run in the Feature race and as a result failed to finish. Another driver to perform well in his Heat races was Jay Cardy (WA) but he was unable to produce a Feature race result being a non finisher. Other non-finishers in the Feature race was one of the NSW Title favourites in Dave Robertson, and also youngster Jessica Cassidy.

Earlier in the night, the Heat races were shared between Francis (x 2), Moran, Holmes, Disney, and Pyne. Veteran Barry Kelleher (NSW) was unable to start the Feature race after he had mechanical problems in one of his Heat races.

Going on form, the two Americans of Steve Francis and Devin Moran head into this weekend's (January 26 and 27) \$5,000 to win Grand National at Sydney Speedway (NSW) as the two raging favourites.

Despite the menacing form of Francis and Moran, the Australians are eager to take up the fight to their American rivals. Heading the list of leading contenders will be three drivers from NSW in David Robertson, Nathan Disney, and Ron Pyne.

Interstate challengers consist of Michael Holmes (WA), Jay Cardy (WA), Peter MacPherson (WA), Darren Forrest (Vic), and the father and son duo of Steve and Aaron Van Zeeland (Qld).

Making up the 22-car field for the Grand National will be Barry Kelleher (NSW), Dean Smith (NSW), Michael Hickey (NSW), Col Robinson (NSW), Liam Heaton (NSW),

Nigel O'Neill (NSW), Jeff Searle (NSW), Jessica Cassidy (NSW), Tim Bink (NSW), Todd Bayley (NSW) and Ben Seery (NSW). The latter three drivers will be making their debuts in Late Models. Bink is a former Australian Champion in the Street Stocker class and also has previous experience in Wingless Sprints and AMCA Nationals, while Bayley is an ex AMCA National and Junior Sedan racer, and Seery a graduate from Junior Sedans.

Grand National format:

Night one: Hot laps, time trials, one round of heat races per car and two x 15-lap mini feature races.

Night two: Hot laps, one heat race per car, B main dependent on numbers. All points from time trials, heat races and mini feature races will be accumulated to determine top-20 cars to go direct to feature race plus four cars from the B main. The highest point scorer is to start from position one in 35-lap feature race.

Please note: All restarts for all events will use the 'Delaware' double-file line-up system.

To find out more about the NSW Late Models visit their website:

www.nswlatemodels.com



ABOVE : Michael Holmes (#91) battles with Devin Moran (#99) and Dave Robertson (#X4).
Photo by Mark Whitehead.

-ENDS-

NSW Late Models media enquiries: Daniel Powell from Redline Media

Mobile: 0432 126 210

Email: daniel@redlinemedia.com.au

Website: www.redlinemedia.com.au