

Wednesday, August 18, 2010

We were off to Canaan Fair Speedway for a special Wednesday night, double points, make-up race, with a lot of special fans in attendance. We were really hoping for a good night, but our hopes were dashed!

The night started out well with a very fast car in the practice sessions. Austin said the car was great and his times were showing that as well, turning some of his best times all year.

He started on the outside pole of the second heat next to Sparky Maclver in the #58. Austin jumped the initial start and got out too far ahead of Maclver, so they had to have a restart. He had a great second start and ran on the outside of Maclver for about a lap, but the #7 of Scott MacMichael got underneath Austin. He ran on the outside of MacMichael for a lap or so and then dropped in behind him into the open hole. He finished there, in third place.

For the feature, he started in 8th place, outside of the #58 of Maclver again. On the first lap, the caution flag flew for the #71 who spun coming out of turn 4. Austin did very well on the restart and was able to get into a small hole that opened up on the bottom of the track. He then started passing some cars on the inside, so when the next caution came out on lap 3, he was in 5th place. He restarted in 5th and went right up to 3rd place before the next caution, on lap 4! He then restarted behind the #31 of Kenny Cantlin with the #58 of Maclver in 2nd. On the restart going into turn 1, Maclver pinched Cantlin down onto the inside of the track, so Cantlin's left-side tires were down on the rumble strips, making him get loose. Cantlin let off the gas because he was so loose and Austin got into the back of him. Austin put his brakes on as hard as he could to try to let Cantlin straighten it out, but unfortunately, Cantlin was already really loose and spun out coming out of turn 2. Austin did a great job going high and avoiding the accident. However, the powers that be felt that Austin spun out Cantlin, so they put him to the rear of the field. This was the beginning of the end for Austin in this race. Starting back in the rear of the field, Austin began trying to make his way back towards the front of the pack. After numerous restarts and getting to lap 15, Austin was making a pass on the inside of Cantlin going into turn 3. Austin was up to Cantlin's left-rear tire going into the turn and Cantlin and he rubbed going through the turn, as Cantlin left Austin half a groove in the middle of the turn. Then Cantlin moved up to give him a full lane. Coming down the front-stretch, Austin was getting past Cantlin on the inside, when Cantlin decided to clip Austin's right-rear quarter panel and turn Austin head on into the front-stretch wall! This destroyed the front end of the race car and Austin had to get towed off the track. However, the team did not give up – with help from NUMEROUS other pit crews, we managed to cut the bumper off the car and put stop leak in the radiator and get Austin back out onto the track. The crowd went wild with applause as Austin made it back onto the track, as most of the fans were quite upset with how he was taken out of the race. He ran a couple of laps before the next caution flew. His dad had him bring the car back into the pits to look it over again and found a leak in the radiator hose. Therefore, Austin wasn't able to make it back out to finish the race, to the disappointment of A LOT of fans!

It was very disappointing to be taken out so hard and in a dangerous manner. However, one good thing that came out of this night, was that Austin got a sponsor to help us get the car back together for next week. The owners of Brookside Equipment Sales out of Phillipston, MA, came up to watch Austin race.

They were so impressed with his skill and said that even though he was taken out, they could still “see what Austin was made of”. We are very grateful to them for their sponsorship and support with getting our car back together. See you on August 28th!