



Elkhart Lake, WI – Oct 8th, 2011), NASA Midwest, Inc.

Great Weather Greet Factory Five Racers at the Great Lakes Finale at Road America

Friday October 7, 2011

Great Lakes Racers Brian Sanders, Lyle Rikken, Paul Arnold, and new Racer Eric Kostamaa took advantage of Friday practice at Road America in Wisconsin.

Saturday October 8, 2011

Racers Greg Wellinghoff Jr. and John George arrived at the track on Saturday. John took advantage of Greg's early championship win to take the opportunity to drive Greg's #77 at a track that had been on his bucket list. While Greg chose to run his car in the ST-2 class albeit with no chance of taking a victory.

Qualifying saw John on the pole for race #1 with a 2:39.019 followed by Paul at 2:39.921, Lyle at 2:40.826 and Sanders at 2:43.582. The race started with a great three car battle between John, Lyle and Paul. Paul's car fell off after a few laps down on power as had happened a few times over the season, leaving Lyle and John to battle it out. John managed to pull away but the alternator tension bracket broke off after 8 laps causing John to pull off. Regardless, John's 1100 laps of Forza training on XBOX had paid off as he grabbed the Factory Five lap record at 2:38.327 before retiring. The race ended uneventful with Lyle grabbing the win, Paul in Second, Brian in third, Eric in Fourth and John with an early retirement. As the race went on the 77 crew noticed listening to Brian's car as it went by that it sounded sick, and Brian admitted it seemed to be getting worse as the weekend went on, he simply hoped his motor would make it through the weekend.

The 77 crew led by Greg Hall scrambled to get the car fixed in 90 minutes before the next race and were successful enough to get Greg out for the ST-2 race prior to the Factory Five race.

In the second race John made up for his earlier breakdown and took off from the start and never looked back. He again set a NASA track record 2:38.134 and went on to win the race followed by Lyle, Brian, Paul, and Eric.



The racers all came off of the track smiling and retired to their trailers to get ready for the season ending awards banquet. With the points races completed, the points would be tallied and the top finishers would be named. Congratulations to the Great Lakes and Midwest Series Champions and top finishers.

Great Lakes

Champion – Greg Wellinghoff Jr.
Second – Brian Sanders
Third – Gregg Wellinghoff Sr.

Midwest

Champion – Team RT Tavi Racing (Lyle Rigger)
Second – Greg Wellinghoff Jr.
Third – Brian Sanders

Sunday October 9, 2011

Sunday's races were all simply for fun and started off with a pursuit race based on best times from the prior day. In this type of race, consistently being able to run laps comparable to your best lap from Saturday would be the goal. Brian, John and Lyle participated in the pursuit race and Brian brought home his only win of the season followed by John and Lyle.

Lyle broke his shifter 4 laps into the pursuit race and had to retire early, initially thinking he had lunched his transmission, but found the repair would not be so involved and was able to have his car ready for him and his co-driver Julie before the enduro. John again tore it up and set another Factory Five lap record at 2:38.120, but was not able to catch Brian.



The racers had a long time to relax between the pursuit race and the enduro and the time was spent with everyone's favorite past time, relaxing in the paddock.



During the afternoon time trials sessions, Rafe Baskin (Paul's son and up and coming Factory Five racer) took out Greg Hall, Greg's crewman for a few laps and Greg's reaction was priceless.





The last race of the day was a 40 minute sprint race at the beginning of the 3 hour enduro. The Factory Five racers arrived on the grid together and Greg Wellinghoff Jr. decided to drive his 77 against other Factory Five's this weekend. Rafe Baskin took his first start in the series as well in Paul's car. The race began with crazy excitement as the grid for the entire race group was set up based on arrival on grid rather than lap times leading to fast and slow cars scattered throughout the starting grid. In the Factory Five group, Brian jumped out to an early lead followed by Lyle, Greg, Rafe and Eric. Greg and Rafe moved past Lyle going into turn 1 and Greg got around Rafe in turn 4, but Rafe battled back on the inside between turns 5 and 6. Heading down towards Canada corner Rafe and Brian nearly touched entering the braking zone and created some exciting moments as Rafe passed Brian for the lead. Greg also moved around an out of sorts Brian on exit of Canada corner. Greg chased down Rafe and took the lead on lap 3 going up the front straight. Lyle moved around Brian as his engine finally started giving up and he retired early. Greg overcooked the brakes heading into turn 5 and went off onto the hard rumble strips knocking something out of whack. Rafe passed Greg on corner exit and held on for the win. Lyle also passed Greg on lap 3 heading down towards Canada corner. At the end of the 40 minutes it was Rafe, Lyle, Greg, Eric, and Brian with an early exit. Lyle continued on to complete the Enduro switching off to Julie and managed to win the enduro thanks to good driving and smooth pitstops executed by Joe Gilmartin, Brian Sanders and Joe's fiancée Erin. Team RT Tavi managed a 5th overall in the enduro with an E1 win and an E1 class record at 1:39.185.





Next up for some of the NASA Great Lakes and East Coast Racers is Road Atlanta is some out of Region racing on December 3 & 4 and the 25 hours of Thunderhill on December 3 & 4.



As another Great Lakes Factory Five season heads off into the sunset, the region is blessed to have increased its numbers by 2 regulars (Paul & Eric) with other racers expected to be on track with the group next year. The racing is as competitive as ever and although there were a few incidents during the season the racing remained mostly gentlemanly. I hope we can continue our good natured fun racing for many years to come and never lose sight of the camaraderie, sportsmanship and enjoyment that we all experience every time we take our cars on the track. I've never met a better group of people than I have racing in the Factory Five Challenge Series presented by NASA.

Greg Wellinghoff Jr.

Factory Five #77



Pics: [Factory Five Spec Racer #4706SP :: Road America 10/8-9/2011 with Greg Wellinghoff's car](#)

Incar videos:

[Greg Road America Oct 2011 Sat Race #1 on Vimeo](#)

[JG Road America Oct 2011 Sat Race #1 on Vimeo](#)

[JG Road America Oct 2011 Sunday Pursuit race on Vimeo](#)

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