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Do it Right!

GO WEST YOUNG MAN---

And that he did, along with his mom and dad and his midget race car. They come to the Midwest to take advantage of the Midget Dirt Track Racing so familiar to us all. They are driver, Austin Burke, his dad, Shawn and his mom, Theresa. When I spoke to them at Macon, they had left their daughter at home because of her Soccer Team obligations.

The Burkes race with ARDC back in Pennsylvania. Their hometown is Saylorsburg, PA., which is close to Pocono International Raceway.

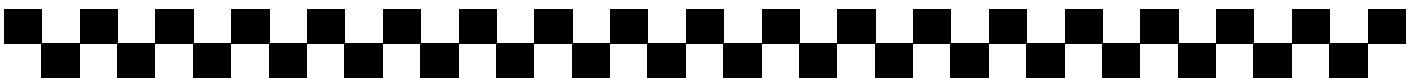
Shawn owns a trucking company there and Theresa is a 'stay at home mom', which in this day and age means she helps with the business, chauffeurs the kids to their schools and sporting events, runs the house and make sure everybody in it is cool with everything, No mean feat!

Austin is following in his father's footsteps in his career. Shawn spent 27 years driving open wheel cars including sprints, and midgets with some modified racing thrown in for good measure. Austin began driving when he was age 10 in Karts. He upgraded to Micros when he turned 13 and has upgraded once again. He started racing the midget last fall at age 14 and after a family discussion they decided that all best racing action was back here with POWRi. Austin is "almost 15" and excited to be one of the youngest Midget drivers in the country. Shawn said that they noticed that other Pennsylvania racers who spent some time racing in the Midwest were like they had a big shot of racing energy and skills when they came back and decided that Austin would profit from more experience on the dirt.

So here they are! Welcome to the Midwest and POWRi! They are headquartering in Brownsburg, Indiana for this summer but must return home for school. Austin is an honor roll student in his home high school and is looking forward to going to Northwest Ohio University to major in mechanical engineering when he gets to be college age. They have a High Performance Program that he thinks will be a good thing for him.

Although his first weekend was a disaster, they have regrouped, changed the paint job and are raring to go again. Austin made his first POWRi feature at Macon and the whole family was thrilled to be racing with Jerry Coons, Brad Kuhn, Nick Knepper and Dave Darland. He will have great stories to tell his racer buddies when he gets back home. One of his best racing memories so far is about beating a 40 year old driver in Karts when he was 13. Evidently the guy thought he had the feature money spent when Austin made a last lap pass and took it all away from him. Austin loves 'playing in the dirt' and at this point, unless NASCAR goes back to its' dirt track roots, he isn't interested in going that route.

Currently, Shawn is mentally planning Austin's racing future and wondering if he can run his trucking company via the internet from anyplace in the Midwest next summer. We bet he figures it out! Watch for young Austin Burke and the Saylorsburg Trucking Company #54 in the Midwest next racing season and we wish him a bright racing future.



Apparel Trailer Notes—

If you are one of the following people, stop by the trailer before the end of October and collect your FREE POWRi T-shirt. If the shirts are not claimed by then, they will be returned to stock. Don't let your shirt get away!.

Jason Woods—Arnold, Mo.

James Rhodes—Hillsboro, IL

Frank Wright—Owensville, MO

Kenneth Bergfeld—Foristell, MO

Kevin Filkins—Zeigler, IL

Tim Stewart—Vergennes, IL

Lori Davenport—Belleville, IL

Dallas Stepp—Washington, MO

Joy White—Pacific, MO

Latricia Bean—Broken Arrow, OK

We have a \$10 T-shirt Sale table going right now. Broken sizes of the Dean King Memorial shirt (mostly L and XL); last year's POWRi Micro shirt (all 2x or 3x); last year's black POWRi shirt; a very few of the white POWRi kids shirt. We will have some of the Battle at the Center Hoodies on sale for \$15, again the sizes are broken. Check it out!

THE VOICE IN THE EAR OF THE DRIVER—

POWRi midget drivers have been listening to the voice of Director of Competition, Jim Siner, since the beginning. Because of a new rule this season, the Micro drivers also became the recipients of that 'voice in the ear'.

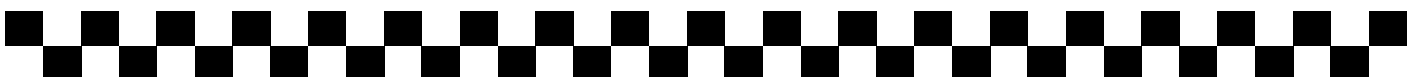
Jim comes from a racing background. His grandfather, Harold, ran a midget back in the 1940s and his dad, "Big Jim", bought his midget in 1959 when he was 16 years old and then in 1988 started helping his sons in their racing careers. Jim has a twin brother, Tim, who currently drives a POWRi midget and is 5th in point standings. At one time, Jim and Tim both drove and tried to share a car. If you have a brother and are trying to share anything with him, you know that didn't work for long. Along the way Jim found his rightful niche in racing as an organizer, race official and now as Director of Competition for POWRi. Jim's partnership with Kenny Brown in POWRi makes excellent sense. With responsibilities divided between them as they are, best use is being made of Jim's skills.



As Director of Competition, Jim handles the cars, drivers, and race officials from the moment they enter the staging area to the moment they clear the post race tech facilities. He is in direct radio communication on 2 radio channels, one with the other officials and push truck drivers (two way) and the other with the drivers (one way). This results in the quick response you see during the race program. POWRi has one of the most efficiently run race programs in the country as race fans have come to expect and appreciate.

As far as whispering in the ear of the drivers goes, the information they receive runs from instructions during hot laps, race time yellow flag information, line up positions, red flag instructions, and other information that a driver can find helpful to settle a difference of opinion on restarts or to give instructions to a driver to stop for consultation. In the past, there have been occasions when the race has been stopped for a while and the drivers were losing their concentration, when Jim's quirky sense of humor broke through. Once time some drivers appeared to be napping in their cockpits, Jim's voice came into their ears saying, "This is your captain speaking, we are now flying at 30,000 feet and expecting some bumpy weather, please fasten your seat belts." Half the drivers looked to the skies for the 'airplane' they were hearing and the other half looked totally stunned.

Watch for Jim managing the orange cone on our restarts. Cars are not allowed to pass before they pass the cone.



OLD TIMER #2 — from Wanda

Tim Brown, the POWRi Flagman (now they prefer to be called Race Starters, I hear), does a fine job. Very professional. But I remember through the years, in the 'olden times' as my kids call them, that we had a different style of flagman, if they had any style at all.

Several years ago, Billy Shipman, who flagged for MARA and USAC, was knocked out by a flying clod of dirt while working the flag stand at 16th St. Speedway in Indy. That was a first for him. It reminded me of other flagman stories. Many years ago, when the St. Louis Auto Racing Association was running in the area, we went to a fairgrounds track somewhere in central Missouri for a Sunday afternoon race. When we arrived we found out that the track had not been used for a couple of years and weeds had grown up 'a little' on the track itself. That was not a large problem. A few laps with the tow vehicles and trailers driving around on the track fixed that. Our main problem was that the flagman did not show up. With no flagman, we had no flags. Roy Brammell volunteered to be the flagman and we scrounged around for whatever we could use for flags. That was the wildest looking flag set you ever saw. Fuel sticks and tree branches for flagsticks with a red shop towel, a white t-shirt, a kid's checkered flag and something yellow and we were in the racing business. It worked.

Did you know that the Knoxville, Iowa flagman uses a checkered flag that is almost 4 ft. square? It is the largest one I have ever seen. It has a pole on it that is almost long enough to poke the drivers as they drive by.

I also remember Flagman, Johnny Slawson, who introduced the fans to the 4 abreast parade lap for the midgets. This was in the early 50's. He was one of the greatest showmen in Midwest racing at the time. He stood in the middle of the track and almost dared the drivers not to drive in a straight line and miss hitting him. Johnny initiated the professionalism to the area midget races that is now the standard. Along with Slawson, we had an announcer named Tiny Olmsted who made the fans in the stands believe that they were seeing the best in the business from all over the country racing only for them. According to Tiny, sometimes we had an Indian Chief from Lower Jockstrap, Idaho running with us. (It was really Jim Millmaker, from Centralia, Illinois.) When you had Slawson with the flags and Olmsted at the mic, you had a lively midget show.

In those days they raced without much thought for exact rules or a lot of money (the purses around that time were \$300-\$500). It was the racing that was important. Sometimes it isn't all about the money.



HAPPY BIRTHDAYS

Some of the POWRi guys celebrated birthdays in August. Well, maybe they didn't celebrate but we found out anyway.

We saw that Steve Knepper is now 'Over the Hill'. He turned the big 50 at Lincoln on August 20. We heard that Leo, who is the owner and one of the drivers of the POWRi Buggys had a birthday on August 23. His son, Danny, said he is 'somewhere in his 50s'.

We wish a belated Happy Birthday to these guys and anyone else who celebrated but that we didn't hear about.

THE SEASON IS WINDING DOWN

The end of the 2011 POWRi season is in sight. There are 4 Midget events left on the schedule and 5 Micro shows remaining.

The points race is almost settled for the Micro Division with Trent Beckinger having the championship sewn up but some of the other positions in the top 10 up for grabs.

The Midget Division championship is ever tightening. Points leader Nick Knepper is still leading but Brad Loyet is slowly gaining ground. Other positions in the top 10 can change before the end of the season also.

The Rookie of the Year honors will fall to a choice between - - - - - and - - - - - on the midget side and between - - - - - and - - - - - on the micro side. Lots of exciting races to watch and decisions to be made in this last month.

The dates and locations for the remaining events are:

Sept. 9—Wayne County Speedway in Wayne City, IL for the Micro Division ONLY

Sept. 10—Coles County Speedway in Charleston, IL for the Micro Division ONLY

Sept. 16—Jacksonville Speedway in Jacksonville, IL for BOTH Divisions

Sept. 17—Spoon River Speedway in Canton, IL for the Midget Division ONLY (Tom Knowles Memorial)

Sept. 24—Macon Speedway in Macon, IL for BOTH Divisions

Oct. 1—BelleClair Speedway in Belleville, IL for BOTH Divisions (Charlene Meents Memorial)

The fall weather should be great for these races but history tells us that the Jacksonville/Canton weekend is usually pretty crisp so plan on jackets for that one. If you have a camper this month is your month. All locations will allow dry camping on the grounds. Get a couple of your friends with campers together and make it a fun weekend and let me know so I can stop by and take a photo and get some fan history for future newsletters when the races get scarce.

Bits & Pieces—Odds & Ends

Since POWRi is off for another weekend, maybe you still need a racing 'fix'. Try this—<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjkmBkFbkNc>. It's a link for the video of the entire features from Lincoln Speedway on August 20. FC member Ross Wece does these and does a great job. Enjoy!!!

If you wear a S—L—or 3X t-shirt, we still have a few Knepper Memorial T-shirts available in those sizes on the Apparel Trailer. Email me if you want me to set one aside for you to pick up at one of the next races. A lot of you are regulars at the Apparel Trailer. We want to start making plans for merchandise for next season. If you have any suggestions, please let me know so I can put them on the list for discussion.

We are donating a "Gear Head Basket" to a charity dinner/auction for the benefit of BEACON of Belleville (my favorite charity right now) which will be held in Belleville on Oct. 8. Hoosier has donated a jacket, Lucas Oil has donated some product, my son's VW dealer has donated an item and I have a couple of racer items to add. If you would like to donate a motor enthusiast item to be included in the basket, let me know. You can bring it to the Trailer at the next race you attend. Thanks. Wanda