



# *Racing History Today*

**Vol. 3 Issue 4 2024**





# Racing History Today

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Photo by Anthony Bristol



# POWER MAKES THE CHAMPIONSHIP BATTLE INTERESTING, WITH A WIN

## BITNILE.COM Grand Prix of Portland

Story by Jaime Kosofsky, Photos by Anthony Bristol



#12 Will Power celebrates in Victory Lane after his win in Portland.

It was perfect that Will Power wasted no time after Sunday's victory in the BITNILE.COM Grand Prix of Portland, saying things "got a little more interesting" in pursuit of the NTT INDYCAR SERIES championship. Because they have.

Power cut into his deficit to series leader Alex Palou of Chip Ganassi Racing heading to the final three races of the year. This is where we again note: Those three races will be contested on oval tracks.

There have been four oval races this season, and Team Penske, which employs Power, has won all of them. Power won the second race of last month's Iowa Speedway doubleheader, with teammate Scott McLaughlin winning the other. Josef Newgarden won the other two,

the Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge and at World Wide Technology Raceway. Over the past two years, Team Penske has won eight of the nine oval races.

Power has 10 career oval victories, Palou none. Power won the 2014 race at the Milwaukee Mile, the site of this weekend's doubleheader. Palou has never raced at the track.

The season ends Sunday, Sept. 15 at Nashville Superspeedway. Power has raced there; Palou hasn't.

Overall, Power has won two of the past four races this season and a series-leading three in all.

Of course, Palou is still the most likely of the two to score a third series title. But Power is still in the hunt and has a lot going for him the rest of the way.

### Palou Does Palou Things

Palou conceded he didn't have much for Power on Sunday at Portland International Raceway, and that bore out with their 9.8267-second separation at the finish line. But Palou still collected 41 points for a second-place finish and only lost 12 to Power.

The podium finish was Palou's 16th in the past 30 races. Only twice in the past 36 races has he failed to finish in the top 10. He's Mr. Consistent, and a continuation of that in the final three races will earn him his third series



**#14 Santino Ferrucci leading #77 Romain Grosjean and #26 Colton Herta**

title in the past four years.

Dario Franchitti was the last driver to win two consecutive INDYCAR SERIES titles. The Scot, now an advisor for Chip Ganassi Racing, won three in a row from 2009-11 for CGR.

#### **Dixon's Finishing Record Is Amazing**

It certainly was unfortunate that Scott Dixon's car was knocked into the backstretch guardrail on the opening lap of Sunday's race, but it was remarkable in its infrequency.

That was only the second time in 399 career starts that the six-time series champion has failed to complete the first lap. The other was in 2005 at the Twin Ring Motegi circuit in Japan. Remarkably, Dixon has at least reached the halfway point of a series race 96.2 percent of the time in his career (384 times).

One race that doesn't figure into this category is the 2004 race at the Milwaukee Mile when Dixon did not start the race due to crashes in practice and qualifying.

#### **Power, Palou, Newgarden on Podium**

Power certainly posted a convincing victory Sunday, but it's worth noting that he accomplished that with some of the best drivers of this era in his wake.

Finishing second and third were Palou and Team Penske's Newgarden, who like Power are two-time series champions. The three have combined for a staggering 86 series race wins. Power won for the 44th time, and he ranks fourth on the sport's all-time list.

Palou has 11 career wins—he's tied for 38th all-time—while Newgarden has 31 career wins. The latter is tied for 10th with Paul Tracy,

Franchitti and Helio Castroneves.

#### **Others to Highlight**

All of the top-10 finishers had reasons to celebrate, as well.

Colton Herta of Andretti Global with Curb-Agajanian stayed in the title hunt by finishing fourth, and he did so despite a penalty for starting his Honda engine on pit road with the hybrid system. He dropped to third in the standings, 67 points behind Palou.

Chip Ganassi Racing's Marcus Armstrong finished fifth, his second such finish in the past three races. He has four top-five finishes this season. The sixth-place finish of Andretti Global's Marcus Ericsson ended a string of

three races where he didn't finish on the lead lap.

McLaughlin drove from 20th on the starting grid (due to a six-spot penalty for an unapproved engine change) to seventh to stay within striking distance of Palou in the standings. Fourth in the standings, he trails Palou by 88 points.

AJ Foyt Racing's Santino Ferrucci netted another top-10 finish—his eighth of the season—by finishing eighth. Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing's Graham Rahal was ninth despite a six-grid starting position penalty for an unapproved engine change, and Andretti Global's Kyle Kirkwood finished 10th despite the controversial moment with Dixon on the opening lap and a blocking penalty later.



**#28 Marcus Ericsson battling during the race**



**#5 Pato O'Ward in front a gaggle of cars during the opening laps of the race**

# BITNILE.COM Grand Prix of Portland Extended Coverage





# BITNILE.COM Grand Prix of Portland Podium



**2nd**  
**Álex**  
**Palou**

**1st**  
**Will**  
**Power**

**3rd**  
**Josef**  
**Newgarden**



**BORCHETTA**  
— BOURBON —

Photo by Anthony Bristol

**BIG MACHINE** MUSIC CITY  
**GRAND PRIX**  
PRESENTED BY **GAINBRIDGE**



# Colton Herta Takes Command with First Oval Victory in IndyCar

Story by Jaime Kosofsky Photos by Anthony Bristol

In the season finale at Nashville Super Speedway, Colton Herta secured his first oval victory after starting from ninth on the grid. Herta managed the ever-shifting strategies and tire compounds expertly, demonstrating not only his raw speed but also a deep understanding of race management. His triumph capped off a rollercoaster season and provided a crowning moment to his oval racing capabilities.

The challenging nature of oval racing was on full display, with teams juggling differing tire compounds and race strategies. Herta's victory was a testament to his ability to adapt to these varying factors. Moving through the field, he strategically conserved his tires during the early stages while setting up crucial overtakes when it mattered most.

Pato O'Ward, who finished second, was no stranger to bold moves on the track, but it was Herta's race management that made the difference. Herta's ability to balance aggression and patience proved pivotal, as he capitalized on a well-timed strategy to leapfrog many of his rivals.

Josef Newgarden, who finished third, also had a standout performance, completing a late charge through the field after spending much of the race outside the podium positions. Known for his prowess on ovals, Newgarden put on a display of calculated overtakes, finishing just behind O'Ward. While he missed out on the win, his drive was a fitting conclusion to a solid season.

## PALOU WINS HIS THIRD INDYCAR TITLE IN FOUR YEARS

Though the race victory was sweet for Herta, the bigger picture saw Alex Palou securing his third IndyCar championship. Palou came into the weekend with a points advantage and managed to stay out of trouble, finishing 11th, which was enough to seal the title. His consistent season and ability to score key results when needed gave him the edge over rivals.

Will Power, one of Palou's primary competitors, saw his title hopes dashed early in the race. A loose seatbelt forced him into the pits just a few laps in, effectively ending his chance of podium contention and any realistic shot at the championship.



Victory Lane Celebration: 1st - #26 Colton Herta, 2nd - #5 Pato O'Ward, 3rd #2 Josef Newgarden

Herta led for 24 laps, while O'Ward managed 21. Newgarden, despite leading the most laps with 54, couldn't quite find the pace in the final stint to challenge for victory. Kyle Kirkwood and Scott McLaughlin rounded out the top five, showing competitive pace throughout the event but falling short of the top three.



#7 Alexander Rossi leads a gaggle of cars mid pack coming out of Turn 3



Three wide action during the race, #11 Marcus Armstrong, #78 Conor Daly and #10 Alex Palou



Victory cheers between Colton Herta, Pato O'Ward and Josef Newgarden



The Astor Challenge Cup trophy

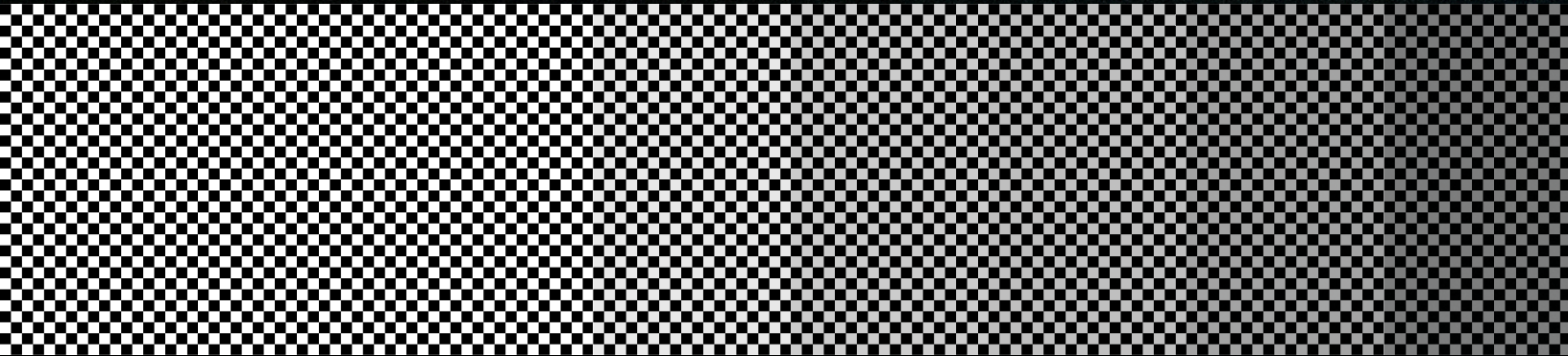


Newly crowned 2024 IndyCar Champion Alex Palou



Photo by Anthony Bristol





**5th Annual**

**270**

**FALL BRAWL**





# LIMEROCK *Speedway*



Photo by Anthony Bristol

# 5th Annual 270 Fall Brawl at Limerock Speedway

October 4-5 2024

## Story by The Spazman photos by Anthony Bristol

Fall, an awesome season, the best of the four. Why, you might ask? Cooler temperatures and the leaves start changing colors. No more of the evil known as mosquitoes. One step closer to hockey.

But, at a small dirt track located in the Finger Lakes Region in upstate New York is nestled Limerock Speedway, a 1/6-mile dirt track. Fall signals two things: that the racing season is coming to an end and that the annual 270 Fall Brawl is just around the bend.

If you are asking,

"What is micro sprint racing?,"

you are not alone. It is a tight-knit community. Akin to being the world's worst-kept secret.

When some race fans hear the words "sprint cars," they often think of 410 behemoths that can be most aptly described as low-flying rockets. Huge right rear rubber. Large wings overhead. Pulse-pounding speeds that are

2016 USAC 270cc Micro National Champion and 270 Fall Brawl Organizer and Co-Promoter, Shawn Freeland. Freeland is widely known in many racing circles as "The Doctor Of Excitement," and it does not require watching him in action for very long to see why.

Freeland goes on to say,

"I have raced successfully in every micro division, but the 270s are my favorite. There is



Start of The 5th Annual 270 Fall Brawl

Limerock Speedway is located in Caledonia, NY and is operated by Tri-County Racing and has been in operation for 60 years, which is heavily steeped in history, and recognizing those who were instrumental in bringing the club and track into existence.

"The Rock," as it is often referred to, is the only racetrack in New York State that caters to micro sprint racing on a full-time basis.

scary while inducing the most potent amounts of adrenaline.

At Limerock Speedway, sprint cars mean quarter midgets (where the kids get their start) and micro sprints like 600cc winged and wingless...and 270cc Micros!

"270cc sprint cars are the "O.G." of micro sprint racing. It is where it all started," says

more going on. We are driving with one hand, shifting four times a lap, and they are wild and wooly."

"Some of the more appealing aspects of 270cc Micro racing are that the class is more cost-effective, it is challenging, and the rules packages still allow for ingenuity."

The majority of entrants in the popular and



**Cars on track during the A main feature race of The 5th Annual 270 Fall Brawl**

yearly 270 Fall Brawl memorial are from Pennsylvania, which is a veritable hotbed for not only sprint cars but for micro sprints as well. Team after team make the 4-5 hour trek to Limerock Speedway to compete in the annual 270 Fall Brawl for several reasons.

Freeland explains that,

“Limerock is an optimal location for 270 Fall Brawl due to its size, the safety aspects like how the walls are constructed so that there are no open ends like there are at so many other tracks, and the track crew at Limerock is among the absolute best in the country. It is just well suited for Micro Sprint racing, and the hard-working staff at “The Rock” is great to work with.”

Limerock also carries with it an ambience that is 100% grassroots racing. It is a petri dish of tradition, innovation, and fraternity. It is a proper venue in which to experience the energy when they let the smoke loose.

Co-Promoters Freeland and Dave Hawkins both laud Limerock as being neutral territory for the country’s best 270 micro racers, offering impartiality and fairness, thus giving everyone equal footing upon which to compete.

The genesis of 270 Fall Brawl was to honor the memory of a couple of beloved Limerock 270 competitors named, #55 Jeff Bennett and #55 John Pasquale. As time and laps went by, Brandon and Scotty Hawkins both lost their lives, and they became honorees of the memorial race.

“This race has become our way to honor the memory of Jeff, John, Brandon, Scotty, Ryder, and any of the other original badasses in the 270cc division, like Pete Skias, Bob Kelly, Butch Coffey, Dana Stevens... anyone who has passed that helped make this class what it is today.”

The annual 270 Fall Brawl brings a large and

diverse group of racers. With them comes character, charisma, speed, attitude, aggression...all being funneled into an effort to notch a win, bring home some cash, and earn an awesome trophy that will forever be someone’s blessed reminder that they harbor the prestige that comes with being a 270 Fall Brawl winner!

The fifth annual “270 Fall Brawl Presented By Mav Motorsports” on October 4th and 5th of 2024 was the highest-paying 270cc Micro Sprint race on the planet. A huge \$5,027 to win and \$327 to take the green. Anticipation was high, with 53 cars timing with hopes of making it to the Main Event. The stands at Limerock were packed, and people at home were set to watch intently on The Cushion.

Mother Nature was a fickle mistress during the 2024 racing season, and she reared her ugly head, forcing the cancellation of Night One.

With the added frustration of losing Night One to rain, the tension and excitement were palpable heading into Night Two on Saturday, which saw Caledonia’s own Pat Kelly breaking out the broom by sweeping Fast Time, Heat 1, and the 55-lap A-Main. Kelly also had the fastest lap in the feature.

29 cars started the race, with 15 finishing after completion of all 55 laps. Kelly’s lead was challenged by lap 40 of the race, where he would lose a position to the 88 of Nicholas Skias. Skias maintained the lead until lap 49, where the 00 of Kelly regained the lead position away from Skias. This would remain until the checkered flag came out, making the #00 of Patrick Kelly the 2024 270 Fall Brawl Champion!

Here is how the Top Ten finishers shook out: Winner #00 Pat Kelly, #88 2. Nicholas Skias, 3. #5r Brandon Heist, 4. #4 Ross Perchak, 5. #37t Ronald Helmick, 6. 3H JT Horwat, 7. #92 Jeff Weaver, 8. #71 Scott Zimmerman, 9. #83F Shawn Freeland (Hard Charger), 10. #14 Mason McAndrew.



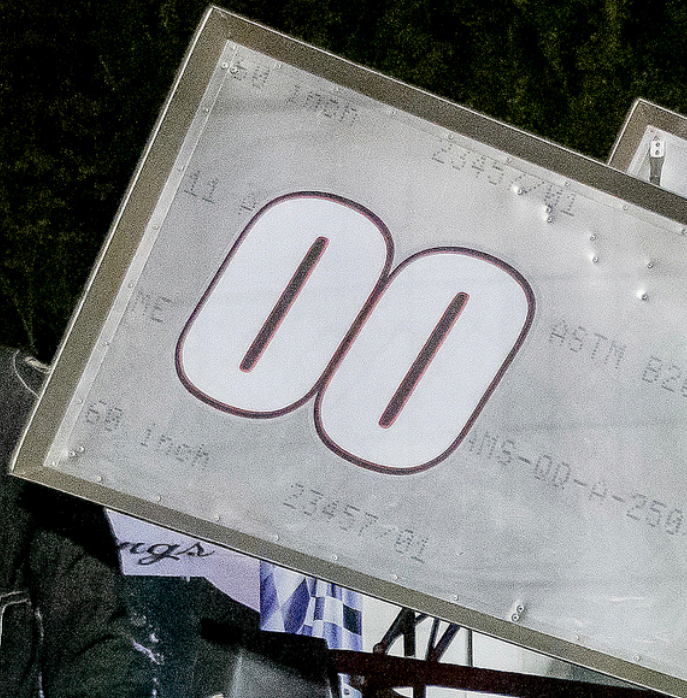
**On track action between cars #3H JT Horwat, #20Mx Craig Myers, #88m Richie Hartman, #29 Jeff Haefke**



**Three wide during the feature of The 5th Annual 270 Fall Brawl, #14 Mason McAndrew, #83F Shawn Freeland, #12H Keaton Himes**



**#00 Pat Kelly completing the pass on #88 Nicholas Skias to regain P1**









Pay to  
 The Order of: **Pat Kelly**  
 Five thousand twenty seven and <sup>xx</sup>/<sub>100</sub>

**Memo: 270 Fall Brawl Winner 2024**

55 55 27 3D 37 3







Photo by Anthony Bristol



270  
Date: 10/5/2024  
\$ 5.027  
Dollars  
Liverock Speedway



# 5th Annual 270 Fall Brawl Extended Coverage



Limerock Speedway Infield Safety Specialist Scottie Mckay



"The Doctor of Excitement" Shawn Freeland, 2016 USAC 270cc Micro National Champion, and 270 Fall Brawl Organizer and Co-Promoter



Dave Hawkins, Co-Promoter



Competitor Jeff Weaver, #92



REMI Hawkins, the official mascot of The 270 Fall Brawl



Competitor MaKayla Smith, #83K



Competitor Ricky Francis Jr., #1F



Three wide action between #71 Scott Zimmerman, #92 Jeff Weaver and #47 Alex Reinsmith



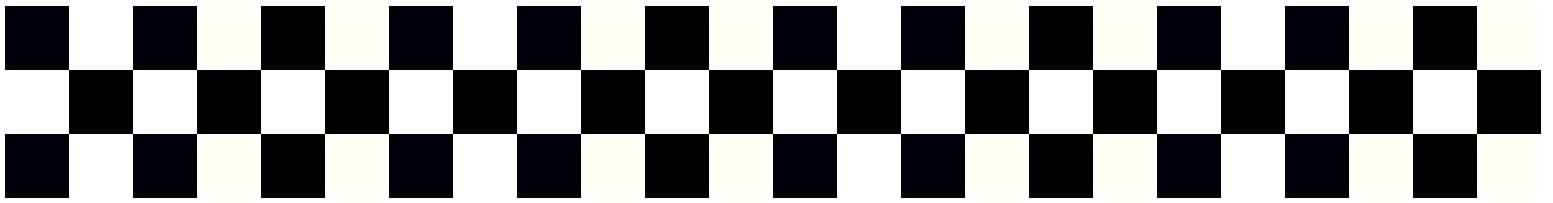
#1F Ricky Francis Jr getting car service at the mid way point of the race



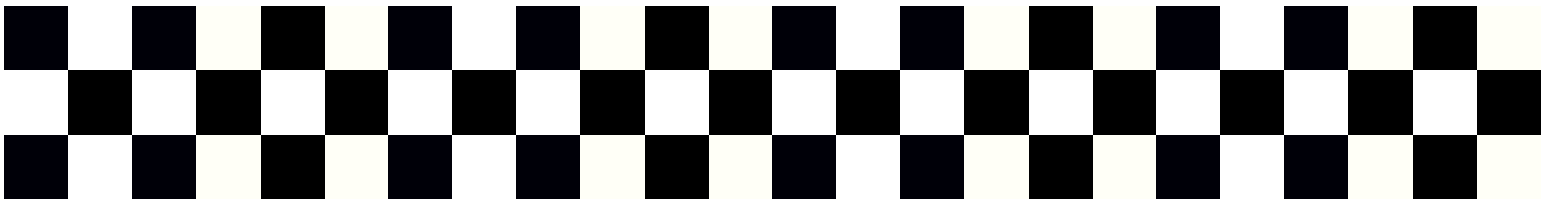
#4 Ross Perchak mid race service







#00 Pat Kelly taking the checkered flag to become the 5th annual 270 Fall Brawl Champion





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Powermist  
TORQUE  
FACTORY SUPPORT TEAM - U.S.A.

83

