

Greetings!

NASA 944 Spec Great Lakes / Midwest wrapped up the 2012 season at Road America on October 6-7 with more outstanding racing and a terrific finale banquet. Twelve racers contested the final event under clear, cool autumn skies.

Sprint Race #1 – Saturday, October 6

Eric Kuhns earned the pole for race #1, followed on the grid by Dan Pina, Neal Agran (in a car generously loaned by Sid Chhikara), Sam Grant, Angel Blazquez, Dan Jauch, Ray Freundt, Brad Raum, Kurt Ristow, Shannon McCue, and Ken Frey.

Kuhns held the lead through turn 1, but soon found himself in the clutches of a charging Pina. The two traded the lead six times (!) within the first four laps of the race in a skirmish that Kuhns characterized as "the best of the season" before a full course caution interrupted. Further back, Grant advanced to third in lap 1, followed by Blazquez and Agran, who retired early with a failing motor in lap 2. Ristow and McCue passed Raum in the second lap, trading 7th position multiple times before McCue secured it for keeps.

On the restart, Kuhns was able to use out of class traffic to his advantage to open a gap on Pina, which he held to the checker three laps later after resetting the course record with a mind-bending 2:42.5. Pina claimed 2nd, followed by Grant, Blazquez, Jauch (later DQ'd for passing under yellow) and Freundt. McCue, Ristow, and Raum stormed across the line within tenths, followed in the standings by the retired Agran and Frey (exited early with an oil leak).

Outstanding video of the battle for the lead from inside Eric Kuhns' #80 car

{vimeo}51352730{/vimeo}

Sprint Race #2 – Saturday, October 6

Race #2 was conducted on Saturday afternoon so as to conclude the series championships prior to the evening awards banquet. Competitors were gridded by finishing order in the prior race.

Kuhns assumed the lead early in this outing, but a determined Pina gave a spectacular chase throughout. Further back, Grant spun in turn 5 on the fourth lap, dropping from 3rd to last. Freundt and Blazquez, battling nose to tail, assumed 3rd and 4th, putting on a fantastic show. Jauch, starting from last after his DQ in race #1, stormed quickly into the Freundt and Blazquez battle, but eventually fell back into the clutches of a resurgent Grant. In the meantime, Ristow, Raum, and McCue relitigated their battle from race #1 close behind, with Ristow eventually

building a 9 second gap.

At the checker, Kuhns took the win from a hard charging Pina by a mere 1.2 seconds. Blazquez earned 3rd after Freundt retired late in the race with a fuel delivery issue. Grant finished 4th over Jauch, who made an outstanding last lap pass attempt on the way to Canada corner and managed the 3rd fastest lap of the race. Ristow, Raum, and McCue followed, reshuffling their positions multiple times.

Terrific video of Jauch running from last to 5th, with a spectacular last lap pass attempt and save:

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

Season Championships and Banquet

The Midwest 944 Spec championship concluded with Kuhns, Pina, and Agran taking the podium positions. In the Great Lakes region, McCue earned the championship over Pina and Raum. Appropriate celebrations took place during the annual NASA banquet that evening and in a boisterous outing to the world famous Siebkens afterward.

In addition to NASA hardware and TOYO contingencies, Midwest Champion Eric Kuhns took home a new series trophy constructed by Ken Frey. The craftsmanship on this trophy, to be passed down annually from champion to champion, is truly heirloom quality. It will heretofore be known as the Tom Stein '444' Memorial Trophy after our friend and fellow 944 Spec competitor, Tom Stein, who passed away in a non-racing related accident in July 2011. We continue to think of Tom and his family often – he is greatly missed.

Epilogue

2012 has been a phenomenal season for 944 Spec in both the Midwest and Great Lakes. Special thanks is due to Jim and Kelby Hartman of Pine Tree Motorsports, who made it to every event and tirelessly offer support to all competitors. Linda Kuhns' contribution also cannot be overstated. From producing series posters to coordinating lunch time catering, we all owe Linda a huge debt of gratitude.

With 4 new builds already underway, a second car newly purchased by team Brewster, and several existing cars receiving upgrades over the winter, we should be in for a mammoth 2013 in MW/GL 944 Spec. If you've read this far and you're not racing with us... why not? We'd love to have you out to an event and give you a ride, let you take a test drive, and get you involved. We believe 944 Spec is the best way to get racing fast and to get faster. Please take us up on the offer to try it and find out!!

GL / MW Round 7 -- Season Wrap Up

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