

Sitterly starts season off right with a big win at Oswego

May 17, 2010, Oswego, N.Y. – Otto Sitterly continued his reign over the non-winged supermodified division at Oswego Speedway Saturday night with a convincing victory in the Burritt Motors / Syracuse Post-Standard 60th season opener on a cold night in Central New York.

Sitterly and his G&I Homes John Nicotra-owned No. 7 started the 60-lapper in fifth position and made an inside pass of Keith Shampine on lap 23 to take the lead. Sitterly pulled away from there and drove unchallenged to his 13th career supermodified victory at the lakeside oval.

“The car was good,” Otto said after his first victory of the new season. “The track, it’s still early and there’s not a ton of grip off the bottom groove. So pretty much anything you could get, you had to try and get it on the bottom. A couple of times I saw guys try on the top in the heat race and a couple of times I just tried rolling around out there. There just wasn’t really a lot of grip there, so you had to get right down on the bottom.”

Sitterly worked the bottom groove to perfection all night, making inside passes in his heat and the feature to win both affairs. He did it behind the wheel of his trusty Hawk Jr. chassis, the car he drove to last year’s Oswego track championship and International Classic 200 triumph.

A popular off-season story was whether Otto would decide to campaign the Hawk Jr. car or switch to the newest member of the potent Nicotra Racing stable, a No. 60 Xtreme Chassis mount.

Two weeks ago at the ISMA opener at Albany-Saratoga Speedway, Sitterly still wasn’t sure which car he’d field at the Oswego opener. While preparing the two supers over the past couple weeks, Otto decided to stick with the car he’s had so much success with.

The opening night of the 2010 season went much like many race nights in 2009, at least at the top of the supermodified time charts. Doug Didero’s No. 3 Xtreme Chassis paced the field in practice with blazing laps under the 16.5-second mark. Didero was just as fast on his way to a dominating heat-race victory, leaving many fans and competitors believing the black No. 3 would run away to a big opening-night win.

But when the feature began, Otto methodically worked his way to the front, taking the lead before halfway while Didero was still hard at work in the bottom half of the top five.

A potential Sitterly, Didero duel for the win never materialized. Didero made contact with the wall while trying to pass Shampine for second, forcing the North Carolina resident to pull his Xtreme pitside.

“There’s no specific plan at all,” Otto said when asked if he has a game plan heading into an Oswego main. “We basically just try to finish the race and not get crashed. My car in open air is very good. There’s something to be said for that because in open air it really works good.

“I’d like to thank everybody who helps, and of course John Nicotra. I want to thank all of our sponsors, G&I Homes and Kenny Ketcham have done a lot for us and all those Florida farmers down there. There are a lot of people who help out.”

Nicotra Racing team driver Davey Hamilton was slated to drive the No. 60 Xtreme chassis in the opener, but was not at Oswego Saturday. The opener was originally scheduled for May 8, which Hamilton would have made, but due to winter-like conditions last weekend in the Oswego area, the race was postponed till Saturday, when Hamilton was already busy in Indianapolis preparing to attempt to qualify for his 10th Indianapolis 500.

Otto and the Nicotra Racing team will be looking to go two-for-two this Saturday when the non-winged supers commence for a regular 45-lapper at Oswego.

Hamilton should be ready to return to supermodified action at Oswego on July 3.

About Nicotra Racing

Nicotra Racing is sponsored by G&I Homes Inc., 5 Brothers Produce, S&L Beans, Florida Vegetable, Flavor First Produce, V.L. Walker Co, Georgia Crate & Basket, Rite-Pak Produce, Quality First Produce, Magnolia Packing, Beaver River Distribution, N&N Corporation, Burnac Produce Limited and Provincial Fruit Co.

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