

OTTO FINISHES SECOND IN 2013 BUD INTERNATIONAL CLASSIC

OSWEGO, N.Y. – Otto Sitterly raced his G&I Homes Nicotra Racing No. 7 to a runner-up finish in the 2013 Budweiser International Classic 200 for Novelis Supermodifieds at Oswego Speedway.

Otto started sixth after timing Friday night at a fast lap of 16.392. Nicotra Racing teammate Davey Hamilton put his No. 6 Hawk Jr chassis on the outside pole with a quick time of 16.254. Dave Shullick Jr., who was driving the newest Nicotra Hawk chassis, timed 12th at a 16.639.

Otto never led a lap in the 200-lap grind, but bided his time early and kept the leaders in his sights. One of those leaders was Hamilton, who led the first 105 laps of the contest with pole-sitter Pat Lavery right behind. Lavery finally overtook Davey for the lead on lap 105, and Hamilton proceeded to begin to re-challenge the Oswego driver for the top position.

Hamilton hung in the second spot for another 40 laps until a part broke on his Nicotra-owned car. Hamilton nearly saved the out-of-shape super but slid into the turn two foam blocks while working lap 145. After a strong run, Davey's day was finished.

Around the time Davey hit the wall is when Otto began to make his charge. Otto ran in the fourth position for over half the race until third-place running Ray Graham Jr. dropped out with mechanical issues on lap 132. With Graham retired Otto moved to the third position until Bob Bond, who was wheeling the newest Hawk chassis, passed Sitterly on a lap 145 restart.

Bond and Otto moved to second and third when Davey hit the wall, and the only car ahead was Lavery, who was fading back into Bond and Otto's grasp.

Bond overtook Lavery for the lead on lap 164 and Otto passed Lavery two laps later for the second spot. With less than a quarter of the race remaining, it appeared the only driver who had anything for Bond's new supermodified was Otto.

For a time Otto closed the gap on Bond, but the Mexico, N.Y., driver made it through lap traffic without a problem, and as Otto continued to pick off lap cars and drive as hard as he could, he had nothing for Bond.

Otto crossed the stripe second to Bond and was denied of a third straight Bud Classic crown. Since 2009, Otto and Bond are the only drivers to have won a Bud Classic. Otto won in 2009, 2011 and 2012 while Bond scored victories in 2010 and now 2013.

With the Classic now in the books the Nicotra team turns its attention to the final points race of the season at Oswego. The team will be back in action Saturday, Sept. 14 for the Fall Finals at the Big O, where track champions will be crowned.

Otto enters the race in another close point battle. Joe Gosek is just 11 points behind in the second spot, while Shaun Gosselin is not out of the battle, either, only 22 points out of the lead. Dave Gruel has an outside shot at the championship, as well, only 32 markers out of the lead.

Every point will count this Saturday night. Otto will be looking for another consistent run to cap off what the team hopes will be a championship season at Oswego. If Otto can hang on, it would mark Nicotra Racing's fifth track championship since forming in 2007. It would mark Otto's sixth overall championship.

Nicotra Racing is a supermodified team owned by John Nicotra and maintained by driver and chief mechanic Otto Sitterly. Nicotra Racing is based in Homestead, Fla., and Canajoharie, N.Y., and has won three International Classic 200s and four Oswego supermodified track championships in its seven years of existence.

Nicotra Racing is proud to be sponsored by G&I Homes, Inc., 5 Brothers Produce, Burnac Produce Limited, Provincial Fruit Co., S&L Beans, Florida Vegetable, Flavor First, V.L. Walker Co., Georgia Crate & Basket, Rite-Pak Produce, Quality First Produce, Sam Accursio Farms, Excel Homes, Ritz-Craft Homes and Beaver River Distributing.