

NICOTRA RACING SET TO EMBARK ON 8TH SUPERMODIFIED SEASON

April 15, 2014 -- John Nicotra Racing is ready for its eighth season racing supermodifieds at New York's Oswego Speedway with drivers Otto Sitterly, Davey Hamilton of Indianapolis, Ind., and now Dave Shullick Jr. of Amherst, Ohio.

In 2014 the team, operated out of Sitterly's shop in Canajoharie, N.Y., will be looking to add to its astounding list of accomplishments. Since the team's debut in 2007, Sitterly has raced a Nicotra-owned Hawk Jr chassis to five Oswego Novelis Supermodified track championships, three Budweiser International Classic 200 triumphs and 17 regular-season feature wins, including four Jim Shampine Memorial crowns.

Hamilton, who also has raced with Nicotra since the inaugural '07 campaign, won his first Oswego main event for his longtime friend and car owner in last year's season opener.

Nicotra stopped last week from managing his green-bean farming business in Homestead, Fla., to talk about the upcoming 2014 campaign.

"Of course we're looking forward to (the year) with this being our eighth year with Otto. We're working hard to keep Otto in the hunt for another track championship, and we have plans to run Davey (Hamilton) and DJ (Shullick) on different nights throughout the season," Nicotra commented.

Nicotra says the team will open the Oswego season May 10 with both Sitterly and Hamilton behind the wheel of his Hawk Jr chassis.

"Davey will be in his No. 6 for the opener and after testing Otto will choose between the new-style No. 2 and his No. 7. The 7 is all brand new, basically everything other than the frame itself, and Otto and the team have done a lot of work to the 2 and we're optimistic it will be Otto's primary car in 2014. But we'll wait and see how testing goes," Nicotra said.

Following the opener, Oswego fans will see Shullick make his return to non-wing competition to run a Nicotra car in the Jim Shampine Memorial event Memorial Day weekend. Looking ahead to the rest of the year, Nicotra says the only time fans will see a pair of his blue supers at the track will be for extra-distance races.

"We're not interested in running two cars in anything but 75-lappers this year," Nicotra pointed out. "It's very hard to run a regular 50-lapper without a good handicap, and I think most people know that. If it's a 75-lapper you may see Otto and either Davey or DJ run; if it's a regular race it will be just Otto out there. Of course, Classic we'll aim to run all three cars, depending on how the season goes."

Sitterly took some time out of his busy schedule to discuss what's been going on at his Canajoharie shop this winter.

“We’ve made some changes with the new car (2). We went through it and freshened it up and put our own little twists on it in some places; changes we hope will improve the car and make it a little different than all the other new Hawk cars,” Sitterly explained.

“Regarding the 7, I took that down to the bare frame. It has a new rear end, a completely rebuilt front end, and honestly, almost everything is new on it now. The latter part of last year, I just felt like it wasn’t handling quite right. Something was just a little bit off, and that’s why I opted to run Davey’s car (6) in the last September race. We’re hoping the work we’ve done will straighten those small issues out. It looks like it will be really tough out there this year so we need to keep working hard.”

Regarding which car he’ll campaign in 2014, Sitterly answers the question similar to Nicotra.

“The definite is that Davey will be in the 6 no matter what,” Otto says. “As for which car I’ll drive we’ll see how testing goes. We’d like to get to Oswego for the open practice, and hopefully another time or two before the opener. I’m optimistic the new car will be our primary, but the 7 has been so good in race trim, that we really don’t know right now. I don’t think we’ll know which car I’ll run until almost opening day.”

Oswego Speedway’s flagship non-wing Novelis Supermodified division will kick off its 53rd consecutive season of racing at the Home of Supermodifieds on Saturday, May 10 presented by Mitchell’s Speedway Press and Planet Fitness of Oswego. Nearly 30 Novelis Supermodifieds are expected to be in action including defending champion Otto Sitterly and Indianapolis 500 veterans Joe Gosek and Davey Hamilton.

John 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, five Oswego supermodified track championships and 17 regular-season feature races 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.