

OTTO TAKES THIRD AND FOURTH WINS OF SEASON ON TWIN 35s NIGHT

OSWEGO, N.Y. (June 22, 2015) – In another remarkable performance of near perfection, Otto Sitterly and the G&I Homes / Riccelli Northern John Nicotra Racing supermodified team raced to a dominating pair of wins Saturday night at Oswego Speedway.

The annual twin 35-lappers produced another wild night at Oswego. A strong second-place finish in his heat race led Otto to the outside front-row starting position for the first 35-lap main event. The first feature lineup was set from a system taking the top four finishers in each heat race, then lining the 12 drivers based on each of their fastest lap times in the heat race. Otto's fastest lap of 16.808 placed him second, which just as easily could have been 12th, depending on the other drivers' times.

Many fans in attendance thought an outside pole starting position meant the race was over before it began, based on Sitterly's pair of feature wins in the first three races of the season.

A win never comes easy, but Otto did not disappoint. He took the lead from pole-sitter Brandon Bellinger on the start and led every lap on the way to his third win of the young season.

"I think it's the second time we've won from the front row," Otto said to Oswego County Today reporter Chris Porter after the first 35-lapper. "Starting position means a lot but the car was free all night tonight; I think the track was probably free. Lap traffic was really tough. I banged wheels with a couple of guys trying to get around them, but that's what you have to deal with, I guess."

The second feature of the night saw Otto start in his usual 12th position. The mid-pack starting position paired with a race 15 laps shorter than a normal feature led most fans to believe Sitterly wouldn't have time to get to the front in this one. But Otto went on a run for the ages, passing cars seemingly at will and making it to a clear track in third on lap 17.

Once Otto made it to third, leaders Michael Muldoon and Pat Lavery were over a straightaway ahead. At this point fans likely assumed Muldoon would win his first-ever feature and the Nicotra #7 would settle for third. However, Otto began to close the gap quickly, reeling off laps in the low 17-second bracket while the other fastest cars were running mid-17 seconds per lap.

Sitterly caught Lavery on lap 29 and quickly passed him on lap 30. With less than five circuits remaining, Otto went to work on Muldoon's #50. He looked low into turn three with two laps to go, but thought better of it.

Coming to the checkered flag, Muldoon slipped off the bottom of the track between turns three and four, giving Otto the chance he needed. Sitterly swung his Hawk Chassis to the inside and drag raced Muldoon to the finish line. The pair crossed the stripe side-by-side in a dead heat. After a lengthy review, officials determined the race a tie, awarding the win to both Sitterly and Muldoon. The tie was the first since 1997 when Eddie Bellinger and Doug Didero were each awarded a feature win in a dead heat.

“I didn’t think I had a chance,” Otto admitted when asked if he thought he could catch the leaders after moving into third on lap 17. “Once I got clear of Connors (for third), I couldn’t even see the 50 or 22. I just kept trying to be really smooth and not lose any ground, then I could see them and saw I was getting closer with each lap. I tried to not even look at them, but just keep going as hard as I could.

“With two to go I went down the backstretch and drove it in really deep on Muldoon but didn’t get to the inside. I wasn’t behind him long enough to know his line into three, so I backed out. He came off the bottom pretty good on the last lap, so I got under him. I felt like I had him at the line, from my vantage point, but I haven’t seen a picture or anything like that, yet. I have to thank all our guys and sponsors for all the help.”

Next up for Nicotra Racing is the Grand Prix 75-lapper Saturday, July 4 at Oswego, where Otto will be looking for feature win No. 5 on the season.

John Nicotra Racing is a Supermodified race 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 four International Classic 200s, six Oswego Supermodified track championships and now 23 regular-season Oswego feature races since the team’s debut in 2007.

Nicotra Racing is proud to be sponsored by G&I Homes, Riccelli Northern, 5 Brothers Produce, Burnac Produce Limited, Provincial Fruit Co., Flavor First, Georgia Crate & Basket, Rite-Pak Produce, Quality First Produce, Sam Accursio Farms, Ritz-Craft Homes, Torbert Farms, Elite Harvesting, Green Bean Packers, Housby and Sunrise Growers.