

Racing enthusiasts enjoyed two days of racing on Sept.1 and 2

by Mike Weber

Columbia County Racing Association division leaders Jeremy Martin, Celeste Hardesty, Curt Nusom and John Nusom each solidified their positions atop the point standings after notching wins in the Reser's Fine Foods Labor Day weekend stock car races September 1-2 at River City Speedway.

A late season surge by Tricia "Great" Brittain of St. Helens – who won Saturday's A main and was third Sunday – has helped propel her into the top five of the sportsman series. Scappoose drivers Bobby Morley and Amber Smith had a night to remember as they each captured their first ever main event wins Sunday. Morley won the street stock A main and Smith won the women's race.

Martin of St. Helens, took

the lead in Sunday's modified main after passing Vernonia's Doug Davenport on lap 21 and led the remainder of the 40-lap race to post his fourth win in the STC Racing Parts sponsored open-wheel style racer owned by Sam Jeffers of Scappoose. Earlier this season, Martin won the Baxter Auto Parts Challenge – an eight-race series with four events in St. Helens and four at Banks. He also won twice at both tracks to win with 798 points, just ahead of Portland's Marc Sayre at 777.

"I've waited 12 years to win a championship and now I might win two," said Martin, who leads the CCRA modified division with just one race left. "I couldn't have won tonight without the help of my pit crew – Morley, Dennis Blasier, Robert Smith and Mike Harrison, be-

cause those guys worked very hard to get the car ready for the main after the transmission blew up in the heat race, so they sure deserve some credit for the win too."

Martin took fourth Saturday, just behind STC Racing teammate Dan Smith of Scappoose, who also had two top-five main event finishes (3rd, 5th) in the weekend event at the Columbia County Fairgrounds facility in St. Helens. Gannin Thomas of St. Helens, also had an impressive performance as he won Saturday in his Generation Transmission racer and was runnerup Sunday.

Brittain led from start-to-finish in recording her first sportsman win in four years and second overall in the series with her Quimby Welding/Fast Racing Chevrolet Monte Carlo. Jon

"Razor" Gillett of St. Helens, had a season best second in his Camaro. Brittain also notched a third Sunday, behind Castle Rock's Doug Hurley and winner Curt Nusom of Gresham.

"It was so exciting to get my first win since 2003 and Jon and I sure had a good race up front," said Brittain. "Unfortunately, we didn't have much time on Saturday because of the 11:00 p.m. track curfew, so I was unable to say thanks to all my sponsors, which is the normal procedure after winning. It was a great win though and I have to give lots of credit to my dad (Bud Fast) and my husband Sam, who both work hard on the car all season so that I can come out and compete here and have fun."

Hurley and Milwaukie's Eric

Lindquist captured B main wins. Davenport and Clint Petty of St. Helens won modified B mains. Street Stock B Main winners included Neil Hardesty and Steven Harris. Morley passed frontrunners Doug McVae of Scappoose and Vernonia's Robert Williams, who collided on lap 39 of the street stock A main and led the last two laps to notch the win with his McFly Racing/STC Racing Chevy Camaro.

Hardesty won Saturday's women's main in the Fast Lube & Oil Monte Carlo for her seventh victory, tying the mark for wins in a season and could break the record September 15. Smith led all the way Sunday in the Alliance Automotive Camaro, with Hardesty in second place.

Season over – Columbia County Racing Association gives titles

by Mike Weber

Six motorsport competitors won Columbia County Racing Association division titles – including St. Helens' drivers Jeremy Martin and Celeste Hardesty, and three drivers notched their first wins in the Napa Auto Parts Championships Saturday at River City Speedway.

Martin won the modified class title and Hardesty won the women's division championship. Gresham's John Nusom and co-driver Eddie Farness of Sandy, won the street stock title, Nusom's brother Curt won the sportsman series and Vancouver's Joe Cherington won the mini stock championship. "The Enforcer" Terry Moss of St. Helens, won his first street stock A main this year and took third in the final point standings. Larry Lemmons of Toledo, took the checkered flag in the sportsman A main and Portland's Jackie Graham won the women's race, which marked the first main wins for both drivers. Milwaukie's James Lutz captured the mini stock A main.

Martin maneuvered up from seventh place, passing Warren's Dan Fox on lap 20 and remaining up front to capture the 50-lap modified A main event with the STC Racing Parts open-wheel style race car owned by Sam Jeffers of Scappoose. It was Martin's third

CCRA win and perhaps the most satisfying, as he earned one of the largest purses (\$1,300) ever at the speedway. Fox took second, followed by Vancouver's Don Jenner and Martin's teammate, Dan Smith of Scappoose, was fourth.

"I had a fantastic season and it was really quite phenomenal considering that we won three championships, but I couldn't have done it without the help of our great pit crew of Mike Harrison, Robert Smith, Dennis Blasier and Bobby Morley," said Martin, who also won the Baxter Challenge Series and the modified division title at Sunset Speedway in Banks. "Dan had a good season too (third place in division) and he's the best teammate I could ever have. Sam is undoubtedly the best car-owner you could ask for and I sure feel very grateful to him for giving me an opportunity to compete in the modified series. I've waited nine years to

win a championship and I finally got it now, so I'm absolutely thrilled."

Hardesty had a chance to break the division's all-time single season record (seven) for wins in a season as she was fastest in qualifying on the quarter-mile clay oval track at 15.33 seconds with her Baxter Auto Parts sponsored Chevrolet Monte Carlo. Hardesty started sixth and moved up to second behind Graham by lap 18. However, on the 19th circuit, Hardesty was sidelined when her car had a broken driveline as she was unable to continue. Graham, who started on the pole position, led all the way to get the win in her T & T Draggin' Wagons/Perfection Automotive Pontiac Firebird and she finished second to Hardesty in the standings.

"It's a great to win the championship, I'm very excited and even though I couldn't get that eighth win, I really feel over-

joyed about the thrill of capturing the women's division title," said Hardesty, who had 10 top-five main event finishes.

John Nusom led the first 13 laps of the street stock main until he exited to the pits with a flat left rear tire on his Tom's Auto & Performance Machine Camaro. Moss capitalized on Nusom's bad luck and took over first place on lap 14 while staying ahead until the conclusion of the 40-lap event, winning by four car lengths over Curt Nusom. Portland's Jeff Lovell was third, followed by

Gresham's Brad Nusom and Greg Hamilton of Portland. Vernonia's Rob Williams was sixth in his The Independent sponsored Oldsmobile Cutlass and he ended the season fifth in the division, a career best.

Lemmons was up front the first 10 laps of the sportsman main until Curt Nusom passed him on lap 11. Nusom spun out in turn three though on lap 25, as Lemmons regained the edge with his Les Schwab Tires Monte Carlo and led the last 15 laps for the win.

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