

Salem Speedway announces 2013 schedule

Written by George Browning
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The 2013 Salem Speedway racing schedule features 11 events and 13 days of on-track action at the historic southern Indiana venue.

The diverse schedule of national and regional programs includes a mix of traditional and new events, featuring both the .555-mile high banked oval and the quarter-mile infield track.

“We’ve put together a schedule with emphasis on special events while also continuing our strong commitment to local and regional divisions,” said Salem Speedway general manager Richard Deaton.

Among traditional events returning to the high banks in 2013 are spring and fall visits by the ARCA Racing Series presented by Menards. The Kentuckiana Ford Dealers ARCA 200 is set for Sunday afternoon, April 28th and the Kentuckiana Ford Dealers Fall Classic 200 presented by Federated Car Care will take place under the lights on Saturday, September 14th.

The Kentuckiana Ford Dealers ARCA 200 will mark the 93rd appearance of the ARCA Racing Series presented by Menards at Salem since 1955. No track has appeared more on the series schedule through the years than Salem.

Arizona’s Alex Bowman and New Jersey’s Tom Hessert continued the trend of first-time Salem winners in ARCA competition in 2012. The 19-year-old Bowman won the spring race and Hessert was victorious in the fall. The past eight ARCA races on the high banks have been captured by drivers posting their first ever win on the Salem oval.

The Scott County Visitors Commission Joe James/Pat O’Connor Memorial, one of the most historic and longest running memorial races in the nation, headlines August action at Salem. The 54th annual sprint classic, featuring the Must See Racing Xtreme Sprint Series, unfolds on Saturday night, August 10th.

Past winners of the James/O’Connor Memorial include such legendary drivers as Bob Sweikert, A.J. Foyt, Parnelli Jones, Mario Andretti, Bobby Unser, Pancho Carter, Rich Vogler, Kenny Irwin Jr. and Tony Stewart.

Indiana’s Brian Olson, driving for Davey Hamilton Racing, pulled off a surprising win in the 2012 James/O’Connor Memorial after fellow Hoosier Brian Gerster established a new one-lap track record (13.957-sec.) during qualifications.

The annual visit by the Midwest Oldtimers Vintage Race Car Club is also scheduled to take place in conjunction with the Scott County Visitors Commission Joe James/Pat O’Connor Memorial.

Late model racing takes center stage at Salem Speedway on Saturday night, June 22nd, as the JEGS/CRA All-Stars Tour makes its inaugural visit to the high banks for the Midwest 150 presented by Focus Eyewear.

The JEGS/CRA All-Stars Tour is one of the fastest growing stockcar series in the nation, featuring teams and drivers from throughout the U.S. and Canada.

“We’re certainly excited about hosting the JEGS/CRA All-Stars at Salem Speedway,” said Deaton. “Over the past few years we’ve watched this series grow in stature while showcasing some of the top young drivers in the nation.”

2012 Snowball Derby winner Erik Jones, who outraced Kyle Busch in the final laps to secure the prestigious win, is a former JEGS/CRA All-Stars Tour champion.

The Lucas Oil Great American Stocks, one of the Midwest’s fastest growing divisions, is in the spotlight as the support division for four major Salem Speedway events in 2013 – both the spring and fall ARCA races, the James/O’Connor Memorial and the Midwest 150.

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Salem Speedway will once again pay tribute to our nation's military personnel on Armed Forces Day with the Spring Speed Fest on Saturday night, May 18th. A great night of racing action, featuring the Lucas Oil Great American Stocks, O'Reilly Auto Parts Pure Stocks and Portland Recycling Front Wheel Drive Stocks, will be capped off with a gigantic fireworks show.

The inaugural Salem Roval Grand Prix is set for Sunday afternoon, June 2nd. The one-hour road racing type event for the Portland Recycling Front Wheel Drive cars will utilize both the infield short-track and a portion of the half-mile high banks. The track layout will feature both left and right hand turns.

The O'Reilly Auto Parts Pure Stocks and possibly other divisions will be a part of the June 2nd event.

Other traditional events planned for 2013 include the 24th annual Firecracker 200 presented by the Scott County Visitors Commission on Thursday, July 4th and the 25th annual Smoker Friendly Discount Tobacco Halloween 200 on Sunday, October 27th.

The 2013 Salem Speedway season kicks-off on Sunday afternoon, April 7th with the third annual Taco Bell/Pizza Hut Express Short-Track Festival. The O'Reilly Auto Parts Pure Stocks and Portland Recycling Front Wheel Drive Stocks will be sharing the quarter-mile oval with the FAST Series Legends Cars and Bandoleros.

Additional information concerning 2013 activities at Salem Speedway, including ticket information, may be obtained by calling (812) 883-6504 or toll free 1-888-246-7223 or by accessing the Speedway web site at www.salemspeedway.com. Salem Speedway is also on facebook.