

Firecracker 200 Thursday

Written by George Browning
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Excitement is building for one the most anticipated races of the summer at Salem Speedway Fueled by the Hoosier Lottery – the 24th annual Firecracker 200 presented by the Scott County Visitors Commission on Thursday, July 4th.

The holiday classic, paying \$5,000 to win, also includes the Freedom 50 for the O'Reilly Auto Parts Pure Stocks and the Independence 50 for the Portland Recycling Front Wheel Drive Stocks.

“We’re looking forward to a great evening of family fun and outstanding racing excitement,” said Salem Speedway general manager Richard Deaton. “Not only will fans see 200-laps of fender-to-fender competition on the high banks, but 50-lap main events for the Pure Stocks and Front Wheel Drive Stocks on the infield short-track.”

Three-time defending Firecracker 200 winner, Brett Hudson of Owensboro, Ky., tops the list of formidable drivers entered for the 2013 edition of the Independence Day race.

The 25-year-old Hudson has won five of the past six 200-lap, \$5,000 to win street stock type races at Salem. Races in which Louisville’s Chuck Barnes Sr. held an iron grip on for a number of years. Barnes, the all-time career win leader at Salem, has 10 combined Firecracker 200 and Halloween 200 victories to his credit.

Hudson, who competes part-time with the ARCA Racing Series, captured both the 2012 Firecracker 200 and Halloween 200. That marked the second time in three years in which he captured both races in the same season.

Hudson and Barnes have one start each in 2013 at Salem, with Hudson finishing 13th on May 18th in the Casey’s General Store 75 and Barnes eighth in the Focus Eyewear 50 on June 22nd.

Those two can expect plenty of competition on July 4th from the likes of Brian Bayer of Birdseye, Ind., David Bayens of Memphis, Ind., Shawn Smith of Louisville and Todd Kempf of Huntingburg, Ind.

Other top drivers that have filed early entries include Tony Conway of Louisville, Blake Hillard of Owensboro, Kyle Hadley of Louisville, Chris Harmon of Brooks, Ky., and Jason Thompson of Shirley, Ind., among others.

The O'Reilly Auto Parts Pure Stocks and Portland Recycling Front Wheel Drive Stocks are set to kick-off the racing action on July 4th with 50-lap feature events for both divisions as a prelude to the Firecracker 200.

Salem Speedway Fueled by the Hoosier Lottery will once again be giving away free Hoosier Lottery scratch-off tickets to several lucky fans, age 18 and older, during the July 4th event.

Spectator gates open at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, with practice getting underway at 3 p.m. and the first short-track race rolling off at 5:30 p.m. The estimated starting time for the Firecracker 200 is 7 p.m. (EDT).

Advance general admission tickets are priced at \$14 for adults and \$3 for children (age 7-12). Kids, age 6 and under, are admitted free with an adult. Advance reserved seat tickets are priced at \$19 each. All prices are \$2 more on day of race. For tickets or more information call 812-883-6504 or toll free 1-888-246-7223. Advance tickets may also be ordered on line at www.salemspeedway.com.