

## PIERCE EXTENDS POINT LEAD AS SPRINTERS BLOW THROUGH IDAHO

by Tyler Schild, Meridian Speedway Staff Writer

MERIDIAN, Idaho—The fastest winged sprintcar drivers on earth packed the Meridian Speedway pit area Thursday for the inaugural running of the Pink Lady Classic. Over 20 of Davey Hamilton's King of the Wing Sprintcars rolled onto the paved quarter-mile to contest a fast 50 lap feature.

Thursday's action concluded with the inaugural running of the Pink Lady Classic as 23 of Davey Hamilton's King of the Wing Sprintcar Series machines crowded the quarter-mile. The drama began before the green flag waved as the race's namesake Pink Lady sprinter driven by Kenny Hamilton laid a stripe of oil on the racing surface and was forced to the pit area. This left series point leader Aaron Pierce and Jimmy Waters on the front row when the green fell.

The stands shook as Pierce thundered into the lead bringing Bryan Warf with him past Waters on lap one. It took only three laps for Warf to show Pierce his nose in turn three, but Pierce slammed the door and continued his torrid pace. While the leaders battled Davey Hamilton Jr. was on the move as he tore his way three-wide toward a spot on the Pepsi-Cola scoreboard. A lap fifteen caution was the only thing that settled the action. Along with resetting the field the caution allowed Hamilton and the Pink Lady to join the field.

On the restart Pierce reestablished his top position while Warf and Ron Larson gave chase. As his Hoosier tires came in Bobby Santos started a charge to the front as he diced his way out of mid-pack to fourth. As Santos turned up the wick on his racer so did second place Warf. At the halfway point just a half second separated the top two runners. With twenty laps left Warf ducked inside Pierce, but a caution cut his run short.

"It took three to four laps for this ting to come alive," Warf said of his machine post race. "It looked like he was coming to us."

Pierce showed off his short run speed again as the field came to full song. While Warf worked to track Pierce back down a battle broke out between quick-qualifier Matt Mansell and Sierra Jackson. Jackson, her sprinter planted in the low line, made a series of jabs into turns one and three, but couldn't make the move stick as she tried desperately to make up valuable series points.

With just six laps to go Pierce got hung up in traffic and Warf pounced. The outside move didn't pay off for Warf though, and with no time left he would settle for second behind Pierce. IN fifth place Mansell put on a smoke show as he melted his right rear tire in order to hold off Jackson.

"That car was a rocket ship," Pierce said of his machine. "It was good to put this car in victory lane. We really had it going good tonight."