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Rose City Scale Racing and RC America-XRAY Asphalt Challenge Race Report

By Tom Camou and Mike Godson

The second annual RC America-XRAY Challenge took place July 17-19, 2009 at IBEW Local 48 located on Airport Way in Portland, OR. Drawing competitors from multiple US states, this event represents the premier outdoor on-road race held by the Rose City Scale Racing club each year. Paul Lemieux flew in from Wisconsin to offer set-up support and run in the nitro race. Much thanks and respect to RC America, Ralph Birch and Paul for their support of this grassroots club effort.

Practice began on Friday, with all qualifying rounds running Saturday. Weather was sunny and dry, with good track conditions the entire time. Traction was provided by track master Mike Ellis laying down a fruit punch recipe with a large sprayer. Between track layout and the overall neutral bite, tire wear was about medium and relatively even side to side. With the mains set on Sunday, this is the way things went down.

Nitro B Main

Jack Balchin went off to lead and led the whole race from the third qualifying position. Clete Landefeld and Roger Christal had back and forth battles during the middle portion of the race. Roger's engine flamed-out during his last two pit stops which allowed Clete to stretch his lead for a solid second place. The first pit stop for Jack was the fastest pit stop of the race only adding 3.5 seconds to Jack's average lap time. Finishing order was Jack Balchin in first, Clete Landefeld in second, and Roger Christal in third.

Electric Mod A1 Main

A bad start in the turn after start finish took out Dave Ehrlich and Jeff Kuney. Dave was out. Finishing order was Kody Knudson in first, Darren Shank in second, and Jared Archie in third.

Mod GT A1 Main

Andy Wells was off to the races in this class, leading from the first lap on. Mark Day had a couple bobbles and moved from second to fifth in short order. Darren Pollard had problems at the 3 minute mark and was out. Mark Day continued to have bad luck and was out at the 5 minute mark. Richard St. Cyr was up to pressure Andy at the end of the race even though he was a lap down. Rick St. Cyr held second place for the latter half of the race, finishing about three quarters of a lap down from Andy. Finishing order was Andy Wells in first, Rick St. Cyr in second, and Troy Mckune in third.

13.5 A1 Main

At the tone Brian Shook took off to an early lead. At about the one minute mark there was a tight battle between Mark Tveten, Jack Balchin, and Rupert Matthews. About half way in, Brian had a half a lap lead over Mark with Jack holding on to third position. With one minute to go, Jack bobbed by tapping a corner and slipped to fourth giving his third position to Rupert. Jack tried to overtake until the buzzer but never got the job done. Finishing order was Brian Shook in first, Mark Tveten in second, and Rupert Matthews in third.

As an interesting side note, Brian Shook was almost disqualified after a near miss in post tech inspection. His car came in at 1499 grams, but after a scale recalibration his official weight was recorded at 1500 grams by tech master Mike Ellis.

17.5 A1 Main

Greg Stevens was off to an early lead followed closely by Devon Patterson. Early in the run Devon tapped a corner and let Jake Danilchik take over second. Devon regained his composure and chased Jake down. After some pretty intense pressure by Devon, Jake tapped a corner and Devon assumed second place. Mike Todd, who had a bad start and was in last place after the first lap, raced to third position by the 4 minute mark. Finishing order was Greg Stevens in first, Devon Patterson in second, and Mike Todd in third.

Nitro Sportsman A Main

Patrick Morehead and Richard Donovan battled for first position for the first five minutes of this 15-minute race. After the first pit stop, Richard assumed the lead. John Welch was in last position until Jose Titus broke a front upright allowing John to take over third place for the remainder of the race. Finishing order was Richard Donovan in first, Patrick Morehead in second, and John Welch in third.

Electric Mod A2 Main

Kody Knudson got off to another clean start and never looked back. That left Jeff Kunej, Brian Shook and Jared Archie fighting for second and third place. Finishing order was Kody Knudson in first, Jeff Kunej in second, and Jared Archie in third.

Mod GT A2 Main

Andy Wells cruised to a second win on a smooth start. Mark Day had a bad crash and jumped the track barrier before pulling his car after a few minutes. Finishing order was Andy Wells in first, Rick St. Cyr in second, and Richard St. Cyr in third.

13.5 A2 Main

Mark Tveten and Brian Shook were in close contact for the beginning of the race. After two minutes, Mark had a commanding lead. This left Brian working to stay in front of Rupert Matthews. Rupert gave it his all, but could not get anything to stick. Brian held him off to the end. Finishing order was Mark Tveten in first, Brian Shook in second, and Rupert Matthews in third.

17.5 A2 Main

It was the Greg Stevens and Devon Patterson show once again. Devon put a lot of pressure on Greg during the first several minutes. After a few failed passing attempts, Greg tapped a corner and Devon went around. Devon held off Greg to the end. Finishing order was Devon Patterson in first, Greg Stevens in second, and Jake Danilchik in third.

Nitro Sedan A Main

This race was a full ten car field with everyone ready to race. Paul Lemieux had qualified in eighth position after some radio problems, but everyone knew he was the man to beat. After a false start, the 30-minute race began cleanly. As expected, Paul was out in the lead early and never looked back. Mark Tveten, Mike Ellis, Darrell Skelton, Tom Camou, and Rick Ellis all had some great racing. Jim Meyer was in the mix early, but had to pull his car off after a track flame out and also had some marshalling difficulties. Mike Todd was also out early with a broken front suspension. The real story of this race was the Mike and Darrell show. They raced head to head for at least 15 minutes trading position frequently. In the end it was Paul Lemieux in first, Mark Tveten in second, and Mike Ellis in third.

Electric Mod A3 Main

Darren Shank took off to an early lead and started to pull away. Then Darren jumped a barrier and needed to be marshaled allowing Jeff Kuney to catch up. Jeff eventually took the lead until a racing rub by Darren bumped him into the pipe just long enough for Darren to take the lead. Jeff continued to chase Darren down until he put his motor into thermal shutdown. Finishing order was Darren Shank in first, Jared Archie in second, and Mike Pease in third.

Mod GT

Although Andy Wells won the Mod GT mains A1 and A2, he joined the field for A3 starting in last position. Andy pushed through the field and was leading by the second lap. After that Mark Day and Andy played inside line tag until the end. They really were just out having fun. After all, isn't that what toy cars are really all about? Finishing order was Mark Day in first, Andy Wells in second and Troy Mckune in third.

13.5 A3 Main

Mark Tveten was off to an early lead until a bobble at the three minute point dropped him to third. Brian Shook and Rupert Matthews were in second and third at the beginning of the race but swapped positions within the first minute. After Mark's bobble, Rupert assumed the lead until he got stuck in a pipe around the four minute mark. This allowed both Brian and Mark to get by and they regained first and second respectively. Finishing order was Brian Shook in first, Mark Tveten in second, and Rupert Matthews in third.

17.5 A3 Main

Greg Stevens, Devon Patterson, and Tim Getchell were out early in a three car break away. This last main would decide the winner of 17.5 and the race ended up being the Greg and Devon show once again. Devon put on the pressure and made a pass at the one minute mark. He continued to stretch his lead until a bobble at the start finish line at about three minutes in allowed Greg to catch back up. Devon managed to keep his lead for the remainder of the race and pulled off the win. Finishing order was Devon Patterson in first, Greg Stevens in second, and Tim Getchell in third.

In Closing

Big smiles and generous hand shakes during the awards were had by all. Most competitors left with some sort of award, and prizes provided by RC America created tremendous satisfaction. With two car kits being given away, all drivers focused on the drawing results. Jake Danilchik and Jack Balchin ended up walking away with a new ride for the winter season.

When everyone was packing up in the pits, discussion of making next years race could be heard in the background. With good competition and a focus on having a good time, the third annual RC America XRAY Asphalt Challenge is bound to be a success. See you in 2010!