

4/7/09

PGM Racing Salem Post Race News & Report:

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PGM Looking Good At Salem

Porter, TX.....The *Kentuckiana Ford Dealers 200* at Salem Speedway in Indiana was a much anticipated race for the PGM Team. "The Boys From Texas" --- the PGM crew --- had long days back at the shop preparing for this past weekend including the driver, 18 year old ARCA Re/Max Series Rookie Stephan McCurley. Stephan was looking forward to taking to the Salem high banks for the first time and getting a good finish in the #03 American Screen Graphics, Porter Glass, Royal Purple Chevy for his team.

Sporting a new bright orange number, Stephan ran about 15 practice laps on Saturday, before having to pull into the pit with a terminal engine problem. The team had to replace the engine, causing them to miss qualifying. They would start Sunday's race 23rd, in a provisional starting spot.

The 'Boys From Texas' were joined by the "Boys From Ohio", a weekend crew of automotive students from UNOH (University of Northwestern Ohio). The help from the students was a big boost in the arm for the team. During the Sunday morning pre-race meet and greet Stephan and the team enjoyed a well deserved break to take time with the fans, sign autographs and hand out complimentary official PGM Racing apparel. Once again, the #03 team was one of the most popular in the pit area!

Stephan admitted he was a bit nervous starting his very first ARCA race. "I only had 15 laps of practice, and we got to make one minor change on the car, and I really didn't have any time to even get any kind of feel for the track. I had no idea what to expect. I was just telling myself to just go out there and do the best I could do under the circumstances." Says McCurley.

The 'best he could do' turned out to be pretty impressive. By lap 90 of the race, Stephan was in 10th place on the lead lap after coming from a 23rd starting position. The team pitted for fresh tires, came back out just a few spots back, and again Stephan worked his way back up to the top 10, and up to 7th position.

Things were looking pretty good for a top 10 and potentially a top 5 finish for both rookie McCurley and this new PGM team at Salem. On lap 131, Stephan was running in 7th spot and while going down the back stretch, a car that was a few laps down with newer tires was trying to go by the cars on the lead lap on the inside, Stephan moved over to the top of the track to give the lap car room, but unfortunately the lap car drove up the track and hit the #03, sending Stephan into the wall, hard. "I was just saving my tires and trying to just drive a smart race towards the end, and I was confident I could go for a top five in the last few laps, and then just bad luck hit us again. I did everything I could to keep from getting hit by that lap car, I got over as far as I could." Says Stephan. "I just sat there for a minute after I hit and I could tell the car was pretty messed up, I was like, yeah this car won't roll in. Then I got out and the front end was completely torn-up, frame dragging, and both front tires were flat, when that happens you don't need brakes."

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The PGM team worked hard in the pit to get the #03 drive-able, and with-in 6 laps had that car ready to go back out on the track, Stephan climbed back in and ended up finishing the race in 19th.

"I am very proud of my driver and my team this weekend here at Salem," says PGM team owner Donny Kelley. "Stephan did a fantastic job with only 15 laps of practice, taking a 3400 hundred lb ARCA car after coming from a late model, at a race track he has never been to, he impressed me, and I know he impressed a lot of folks watching. I am very pleased with this run, even with the bad luck, I think we showed today that we have a very competitive team with a very good driver."

"Overall it was a good weekend for me too, says Stephan. I am glad we were able to do what we did with what little practice we had. I enjoyed meeting the fans in Indiana, and getting the experience at Salem. I am really looking forward to going to Rockingham, I am confident we can get a top five or better."

Donny Kelley and the team are looking forward to Rockingham, too. "I think after coming here to Salem we have a really good positive momentum going. We had all worked so hard for weeks as a team, and the boys really worked extra hard all weekend, and we were glad we had the UNOH students here to help, they did a great job." Say's Kelley. "We have the Rockingham car ready to go, we have a brand new engine from Steve Allen, and we are going to be there with more good stuff for the fans, and we hope they come down and get some free t-shirts," He continues, "and that's not all we got for them, we are going to give them a great show with the #03, you can count on that."

For more information and race photos from Salem's race please visit: www.pgmracing.net

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PGM Team Owner Donny Kelley talks with fans during the Salem Meet and Greet



The PGM chevy sports some new bright colors at Salem