

The 2nd Annual Jake's 150

June 22, 2002

A huge crowd gathered for the highest paying event on the regular season Speedrome Late Model calendar. With Jake feeling a bit under the weather and not being able to attend, Speedrome Hall of Fame member Joe Simpson greeted each of the 29 drivers on hand for the contest. The "Big Dog" Bobby Douthitt set quick time earlier in qualification with a lap of 18.797 seconds. A nine was drawn on the lineup inversion putting Steve Frost and Casey White on the front row for the 150-circuit classic.

The green flag flew with White taking the first advantage. He paced the field for five rounds before "the man with no fear" Bill Tunny Jr took the point. His brother, 2000 World Figure 8 champion Bruce, soon joined him for a 1-2 Tunny breakaway. Those early laps saw White, 1994 track champion Rodney Sizemore, and 1987 top rookie RJ Norton Jr rounding out the top five. Norton soon passed his way to third and began pressuring the Tunny brothers. The family pair traded the one spot several times around 35 complete.

After a one third mark restart, the trio became four as 1996 World Figure 8 runner-up Fred Bear Jr joined the battle at the front. The group had one more joining the party a few circuits later when Norton's teammate Curtis McMurtrey came forward. As the event snuck up on halfway, the five machines were the only cars on the lead lap with Bruce pacing the way.

Halfway brought a minor disaster for leader Bruce Tunny when he collided with hearing-impaired driver Steve Prine on lap 76. The wreck and the red flag shuffled Bear to the top spot. Bruce had minor damage, but was forced to pit and return to the tail still on the lead lap. At that point, the top five was Bear, Bill Tunny Jr, Norton, McMurtrey, and the aforementioned defending track champion Bruce Tunny.

Bear stretched out a straightaway lead for the largest of the event. The other four were closely bunched in a tussle for the runner-up position. The tide turned again as veteran George Sutton and rookie Keith Richee collided in turn three in front of leader Bear. Fred came away from that with a win costing left front flat on that fateful 106th lap. RJ Norton Jr inherited the lead with Bruce back into second followed by brother Bill and McMurtrey.

The defending Late Model champion used all his experience putting all the pressure on Norton, but to no avail. RJ Norton Jr paced the final circuits to win the 2nd annual Jake's 150 and the \$2000 top prize. It was the biggest win of Norton's Speedrome career. Bruce was a game second with his older brother Bill taking home third. Curtis McMurtrey was fourth with George Sutton fifth two laps off the pace.



2002 Jake's 150 Champion RJ Norton Jr



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- 1 RJ Norton Jr
- 2 Bruce Tunny
- 3 Bill Tunny Jr
- 4 Curtis McMurtrey
- 5 George Sutton
- 6 Bobby Douthitt
- 7 Fred Bear Jr
- 8 Steve Frost
- 9 Donnie Garrigus III
- 10 Casey White
- 11 Dale Knauss
- 12 Chris Green
- 13 Larry Hahn
- 14 Robert Downey Jr
- 15 Curt Unrue
- 16 Rodney Sizemore
- 17 Scott Settles
- 18 Keith Richee
- 19 Steve Prine
- 20 John Passehl
- 21 Jeff Shackelford
- 22 Jeff Hizer
- 23 Bobby Whitaker
- 24 Eddie Snapp Jr
- 25 Steve Durham
- 26 Wes Spillers
- 27 Speedy Teepe
- 28 Ronnie Rigdon
- 29 Sean Deppe