

# RACING INSIDER



## 2022 SEASON SCHEDULE

America's National Park Of Speed



**May 20-22**  
SVRA Vintage Festival Weekend

**June 3-5**  
MotoAmerica Superbike Series  
& Vintage MotoFest

**June 9-12**  
NTT INDYCAR SERIES  
Sonsio Grand Prix Presented by AMR

**June 17-19**  
WeatherTech Chicago Region  
SCCA June Sprints

**June 30-July 3**  
NASCAR Cup Series KWIK TRIP 250  
Presented by JOCKEY Made in  
America & NASCAR Xfinity Series  
Henry 180

**July 14-17**  
WeatherTech International  
Challenge with Brian Redman

**August 4-7**  
IMSA SportsCar Weekend

**August 19-21**  
World Challenge

**Sept 16-18**  
Ariens Art on Wheels  
Vintage Weekend  
featuring VSCDA



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EVENTS

# Slinger Nationals bringing the best talent to town for its 43rd year

*New NASCAR Hall of Fame Inductee Matt Kenseth highlights the field of drivers from across the nation*

Conley Media Staff

SLINGER — With summer quickly approaching in Washington County, there are many things Washington County residents find themselves looking forward to. Things like nice weather, plant life flourishing once again, and maybe even taking a trip to the lake.

And of course, there's also the Slinger Nationals.

On July 12, the 43rd annual WABAM Slinger Nationals will bring racers and fans from around the country back to Slinger Speedway.

"That brings racers from all over the country," Slinger Speedway owner Todd Thelan said. "That brings racers from as far south as Florida, as far west as Washington state, as far east — I'm pretty sure there's racers coming from I want to say Ohio — but they come from all over the country to the Slinger Nationals, and we get stars like Matt Kenseth, who is racing this year — he's a NASCAR champion."

And not only is Kenseth a NASCAR champion, but on May 4 he became a Hall of Famer as it was announced he had been inducted into the NASCAR Hall of Fame in his first time on the ballot.

But while his success in NASCAR is not to be overstated, he's also the most successful driver to ever hit the asphalt at the Nationals. Kenseth currently holds the all-time record with eight victories at the Slinger Nationals, and this summer he'll be going for win No. 9.

"The Slinger Nationals has long been one of my favorite races. It goes back to when I was a kid," Kenseth said in a press release announcing his return to the Slinger Nationals. "I remember guys like Bobby Allison, Neil Bonnett, and Mark Martin coming to race in the Nationals, and taking on the big names in Wisconsin, like Dick Trickle and Joe Shear."

"It always has been and still is a must-see event and one of the biggest short track races of the year."

Thelan, who has watched Kenseth race at the Slinger Nationals several times before, can attest to the skill that he displays on the track.

"It's one of his favorite tracks. He has a knack — well he's a superstar to begin with — but he's especially good at Slinger," Thelan said. "I remember back in the early 90s the first time I saw him race there and you could just tell from the first day he got on the track just how good he was and the raw, pure talent he has."

But Kenseth is not the only NASCAR driver to make his way to Slinger this July. Thelan said that Ty Majeski, Johnny Sauter and Derek Kraus will also be competing at the Nationals this year, and he added that there are a couple more NASCAR drivers who will likely be competing there as well, but he cannot announce them until their participation is finalized.

The race has come quite a ways from its early beginnings according to Thelan, who said that the effort to create the race was spearheaded in part by Wisconsin racing legend Dick Trickle.

"The barnstorming racers that raced pretty much for a living and they raced five, six days a week, they decided that they wanted to have a special event at Slinger Speedway, and Dick Trickle was the guy behind it," Thelan said. "He came to the promoter at Slinger and said, 'How do we have a big race here? What day do we do it on where we can get all the guys to come?' Because they came from wherever. So they came up with a Tuesday night. And that was pretty much the start of mid-week racing."

Tickets for this year's Slinger Nationals are on sale now. Kids under the age of 8 get in free, kids between the ages of 8 and 15 will cost \$12, ages 16-61 will cost \$25 per ticket, and fans age 62 and up will cost \$22. Fans can find more information on tickets and the race at [slingersuperspeedway.com](http://slingersuperspeedway.com)



Associated Press

Matt Kenseth, center, stands next to the trophy in Victory Lane after winning the NASCAR Sprint Unlimited auto race at Daytona International Speedway, on Feb. 14, 2015, in Daytona Beach, Fla. Kenseth was elected to NASCAR's Hall of Fame on May 4.



Daily News file photo

Ty Majeski (91) and Travis Dasso (35) approach turn four during the 38th SUPERSEAL Slinger Nationals race at Slinger Speedway in 2017.

# Did you know that racing is a big deal in Wisconsin?

## A recent out-of-state transplant talks about what he's learned about the racing scene in southeastern Wisconsin

By Michael Grennell  
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Growing up in California, I didn't really follow racing all that closely.

Don't get me wrong, I knew of guys like Jeff Gordon, Dale Earnhardt Sr. and Dale Earnhardt Jr., and Jimmie Johnson. I also knew that NASCAR was big in the southern states, and of course you have the Indianapolis 500. But as far as I really knew, racing was mostly popular out in the southern United States.

And then I moved to Wisconsin and discovered that racing is a big deal out here. And one of the big tracks in southeastern Wisconsin is the Slinger Speedway.

Before moving to Wisconsin, I had never heard of Slinger, let alone Slinger Speedway. But it's a pretty big deal I've come to learn. Quite a few big name drivers have made their way around the track at Slinger at one point or another. Guys like Dale Earnhardt Sr., Matt Kenseth, Kyle Busch, and Michael and Darryl Waltrip.

Even a non-racer fan like myself can recognize and appreciate those names.

"I call it the Lambeau Field of short track racing. It truly is," Slinger Speedway owner Todd Thelan said. "There's a handful of

tracks in the country that are known, that you get on an airplane and sit next to somebody and say you're from Slinger or you race at Slinger or you go to Slinger, and right away (they'll recognize) Slinger Speedway if they're a racing fan. They don't need to be a short track fan, but they've heard of it."

Slinger Speedway has come a long way from its humble beginnings. According to Thelan, it started out as a dirt track back in the 1940s, in what was basically an open field for the drivers to test in. Soon afterwards regular weekend night races would come to the Slinger, which would remain a dirt track up until 1974 when it was finally paved. From there on out, Slinger Speedway quickly became one of the most popular short tracks in the area, and gained attention nationwide.

"The side by side action you see at Slinger is very unique, because of the banking and the traction that the cars can get," Thelan said. "They can race side by side lap after lap. And it makes for more entertainment that way. It's fun to watch."

As I've come to learn more about racing in the area, I've started to gain more interest in going to check out some of these races this summer. And the best part is there are plenty

of options in the area to choose from — not just Slinger Speedway.

"We're so spoiled around here that you don't know what you have until you don't have it anymore. And we have had tracks close down like ... Lake Geneva (which was a staple) in the area," Thelan said. "So we've seen some tracks shutter, but it's nothing like some of the other places in the country where short track racing is all but gone. It's what we grew up with. It's like Texas with football, and southern states and year-round baseball, things like that. Up here a lot of us just grew up in the short track racing world."

"We're just so used to it we're spoiled. It's everywhere. My home is in Oconomowoc, and within (about two hours) of here I can go to I'm thinking at least eight to 10 different tracks, from Slinger to Jefferson to Beaver Dam — there's actually two tracks in Beaver Dam — to Madison to Plymouth, the Dells, Rockford ... you know there's so many race tracks in the area."

After hearing all that, yeah I'd say it's safe to say the area is spoiled when it comes to racing. And I'd also say I'm feeling pretty lucky to be in an area where I can get to see some great racing this summer.



Daily News file photo

Luke Fenhaus #4 of Wausau WI diving down under Carson Hocesvar #14 of Portage MI on his way to a 1st place finish in the Slinger Nationals Qualifying Race last year.

## All-Time Winning Drivers

### 1. RICHARD PETTY (200)

They call him the King for a reason. Richard Petty won the Cup title in 1964, 1967, 1971-72, 1974-75, and 1979. He took a record seven checkered flags at the Daytona 500, and memorably won 27 times in 1967 — including 10 in a row.

### 2. DAVID PEARSON (105)

One of Petty's principal rivals, David Pearson was Cup champion in 1966 and 1968-69. Still, his simply amazing 105 total career wins put the late Silver Fox far, far behind the No. 1 position.

### 3. JEFF GORDON (93)

Jeff Gordon debuted at the same Atlanta Hooters 500 where Richard Petty made his final NASCAR appearance in 1992. Known as the Rainbow Warrior, Gordon would claim Cup trophies in 1995, 1997-98 and 2001, becoming the poster boy for the modern NASCAR era.

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June 25 - SLAMFEST

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# Fun and affordable: MotorMania brings a car show for everyone to enjoy

*From Hot Wheels to slot cars to old roadsters and more, MotorMania hopes for an even bigger turnout in its third year of existence*

By Michael Grennell  
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WEST BEND — When it comes to racing in southeastern Wisconsin, many fans can easily point out the nearest short track for one to go to and catch the next race.

But what if you're looking for something more than just racing? What if you're looking for something that the whole family can enjoy?

That's where MotorMania comes in.

Now in its third year of existence, MotorMania 2022 will fill the Washington County Fairground once again this summer from June 24 through June 26.

"It's a motorsports event that is a show for everybody," MotorMania owner/founder John Bagley said. "Instead of just having a regular car show, which is the norm around Wisconsin where you just have cars show up in a parking lot, we want to bring motorized events too, along with the car shows. We want to have an event for everybody, where every brand, every year is welcome."

And when the Washington County native says that the goal is to have an event for everybody, he means it. The car show part of the event is open to just about any vehicle from any era according to Bagley, from older street rods to classic cars and even motorcycles and trucks. But beyond the show aspect of the event, MotorMania also looks to provide entertainment for kids with its Hot Wheels Challenge.

"The Hot Wheels Challenge is something that we came up with at the last show over winter. It's like a 16-foot-long racetrack for

the kids," Bagley said. "It's six lanes of racing for the kids. They get their Hot Wheels out and they race them, and at the end they jump off the end of it."

For those who are older in age but young at heart, Bagley says there will be slot car drags to enjoy, with three 100-foot tracks to compete on. And according to Bagley, the racers that show up for this go all out with their cars.

"They're all custom slot cars, 3D printed and painted," he said. "I mean some of these cars are \$1,000."

He also added that the slot car drags will help raise money for the local children's hospital.

The weekend will also feature two stages of live music every day during the event, and this year there will also be 300-foot street drags for fans to watch.

"We're bringing our own safety team in and it'll be a stop and go light and people can stand on the other side of the cyclone fence and watch the races," Bagley said. "It's a lot safer and a lot cheaper than going to a drag strip."

But the biggest draw of the weekend according to Bagley will be the burnout pit. In a 100 foot by 200 foot area, participants will get the chance to burn some rubber — both figuratively and literally as Bagley added that some participants can and will have their tires catch fire in the pit.

"Car, truck, whatever you're going to drive starts out at one end of the burnout pit, and then they basically ... get the chance to go nuts on that car," he said. "Take out their aggression is what I always tell everybody."

"It's a really cool show to watch."

As the date of the event gets closer, Bagley said he is getting more and more excited about how this year's MotorMania will turn out. When the first event took place in 2020, Bagley said that they had 900 participants on the first day, and 1,500 on the second day.

This year he hopes to double those numbers.

"We try to keep it a fair price show. For your show car, it's only \$5 to get in there, and that's cheaper than a parking lot for a lot of these other shows where it's \$10 to go sit in the parking lot with your buddies," he said. "We're really blessed to have great sponsors and great backers because we've made a great name for ourselves in the last two and a half years."

For more information on this year's MotorMania, visit their website at [themotormaniamania.com](http://themotormaniamania.com).



Photo courtesy of John Bagley and MotorMania

A truck participates in the burnout pit at MotorMania.



Photo courtesy of John Bagley and MotorMania

Classic cars sit on display at MotorMania.



Photo courtesy of John Bagley and MotorMania

Two cars race down the track at MotorMania.



Photo courtesy of John Bagley and MotorMania

The High Roller II monster truck.

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# Fun and excitement galore to be found in Slinger this summer

*Demolition derbies, fireworks and monster trucks among the highlights on this year's schedule at Slinger Speedway*

Conley Media Staff

SLINGER — While the state has seen some gloomy weather this spring, things will soon brighten up in Washington County, as this year's schedule of races will swing into full gear at the Slinger Speedway.

The track has already seen its first race of the year come to a successful conclusion, as defending super late model champion Luke Fenhaus won the inaugural Keen Parts Miracle on the High Banks 75 on April 24. Now, there will be races on each Sunday afternoon leading up until Memorial Day, where the season will really kick into gear.

On May 29, the EH Wolf & Sons Memorial Day Special will take place at 6:30 p.m., and fans will be in store for a special treat as this race is one of three to take place at Slinger this year that will feature a fireworks display. Slinger Speedway owner Todd Thelan confirmed that there will be a fireworks display at the race, as well as at the Washington Country Fair Park & Conference

Center Independence Day race on July 3, and the IBEW Local Union 4949 Labor Day race on September 4.

After Memorial Day, there will be races held every Sunday night at 6:30 p.m. at the Speedway. There will be a variety of events and tie-ins at each race, such as the 5th Annual Keith's Marina Race Against Cancer on June 12, which will benefit Chix 4 A Cause, and the PMF Landscape Supply Scout Night on June 19, in which all uniformed Scouts and their leaders will receive free entry into the race.

Thelan mentioned that fans will be looking forward to June 25 and August 20, where they can witness the Saturday night special event — SLAMFEST.

"They're races that are meant for wrecking," Thelan said. "It's like a rolling (demolition) derby."

Of course the biggest event of the summer will be the 43rd Annual WABAM Slinger Nationals held on July 12. Among the many drivers to compete in this year's Nationals is eight-time champion and

NASCAR Hall of Fame inductee Matt Kenseth, who will look to add to his Nationals record with his ninth victory at Slinger.

And while a lot of attention will be paid towards the Slinger Nationals and other car races, Thelan said fans should make sure to check out some of the other races and events that will be coming to the Speedway this year. These races include not only the SLAMFEST demolition derby-style event, but truck races, a motorcycle exhibition race on July 24, and for the first time in many years, Slinger Speedway will host a monster truck rally at the end of September.

"We're trying to diversify the business into different kinds of motorsports," Thelan said. "That's one that's kid friendly and ... it's been probably 20 years since they've been (at the Speedway). It's more kid friendly and it's different."

For more information on these events and what else is in store at the Slinger Speedway this summer, check out their website at [slingersuperspeedway.com](http://slingersuperspeedway.com)



Photos courtesy of Ron Erstad Jr.

Drivers compete at the Slinger Speedway on April 24 at the Keen Parts Miracle on the High Banks 75 race in the Speedway's season-opener.



Photo courtesy of Ron Erstad Jr.

Drivers compete at the Slinger Speedway on April 24 at the Keen Parts Miracle on the High Banks 75 race in the Speedway's season-opener.

# NASCAR legend continues to be remembered at Slinger Speedway

Nearly three decades after his death, Alan Kulwicki's legacy lives on every year

Conley Media Staff

SLINGER — It's been nearly 30 years since legendary race car driver Alan Kulwicki died in a plane crash outside of Blountville, Tennessee. But his spirit continues to live on each year with the Alan Kulwicki Memorial race at the Slinger Speedway.

Before becoming a national name with NASCAR, Kulwicki started his racing career on the short track circuit in Wisconsin. And one track that he always had success on was the Slinger Speedway.

"I can say this from experience, back in the 70s when I was a little kid and I'd go to Slinger and I'd watch Alan race," Slinger

Speedway owner Todd Thelan said. "He was a local champion that made it down south, made it down to NASCAR country and became a champion, and he pretty much did it all on his own. He was offered rides with the big teams, back in the 80s, and he turned them all down and went independent, which is really hard to do against the biggest teams in the country."

At Slinger, Kulwicki won the super late model championships in 1977 and 1978, and then in 1981 he won the prestigious Slinger Nationals in just its second year of existence. From there on out, he started his own NASCAR team, and eventually in 1992 he claim-

ed the NASCAR Cup championship. He wouldn't get the chance to build off that success though, as he was killed in a plane crash on April 1, 1993.

"Ever since then, the Alan Kulwicki Memorial has been run at Slinger Speedway," Thelan said. "I say he's a hero of mine. One of those childhood heroes that you grow up watching and someday that you'll want to meet. And now I own the racetrack that he grew up on, cut his teeth on. So that's kind of cool."

NASCAR Hall of Fame inductee Matt Kenseth won the inaugural Alan Kulwicki Memorial race in 1993, and the most recent winner of the race was Alex Prunty in 2021, as he won the event

for the second time in the last four years.

Kulwicki's memory also continues on through the Kulwicki Driver Development Program, in which up-and-coming racers from around the country compete for the chance to win a \$50,000 grand prize. Last year's winner of the program was 17-year-old Luke Fenhaus from Wausau — who also won the Slinger Nationals that summer.

The memorial race will be held once again this summer on August 7. And as fans prepare to come out to the Slinger Speedway, Thelan is happy to be able to continue to honor the man who helped put Slinger Speedway on the map.

"It's been a long time

since he passed, but he's helped make Slinger Speedway what it is," he said.



Associated Press

Hooters 500 winner Bill Elliott, left, and NASCAR Winston Cup champion Alan Kulwicki celebrate in Victory Lane following the Hooters 500 at Atlanta Motor Speedway in Hampton, Ga., in this Nov. 15, 1992, file photo.



Mike Comer / Getty Images

NASCAR Chairman and CEO Jim France presents Dale Earnhardt Jr. with his jacket during the National Hall of Fame Class of 2021 Blue Jacket ceremony at NASCAR Hall of Fame on January 20 in Charlotte, N.C.



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JUNE 11	BREW CITY BANGER	SEPT 9-11	GREAT LAKES SPORTS CAR CLUB GRAND PRIX
JUNE 17-19	ARCA MIDWEST TOUR	SEPT 15	MILWAUKEE TRACK DAY
JUNE 23-26	XTREME XPERIENCE	SEPT 17-18	THE RUSTY WALLACE RACING EXPERIENCE
JULY 8-9	MILLERS AT MILWAUKEE VINTAGE INDY CAR EVENT	OCT 13	MILWAUKEE TRACK DAY
JULY 16	TRACTOR & TRUCK PULL		

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FATHER'S DAY 100  
SUNDAY, JUNE 19 - 1PM**



**ARCA NATIONAL TOUR  
MENARDS SERIES  
SUNDAY, AUG 28 - 2PM**



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*SCHEDULE IS CURRENT AS OF 5/5/2022 - ADDITIONAL EVENTS MAY BE ADDED THROUGHOUT THE SEASON. PLEASE VISIT WISTATEFAIR.COM FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE-SCHEDULE.*

