

LATE MODEL DIGEST

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A hot tribute at Auburndale

closerlook: Thrilling throwback for Webster, Ingram families ... by Jim Carson

Daniel Webster grew up immersed in short-track racing, as the son of longtime Sunshine State car builder and setup man Glenn Webster. Some of the ins and outs of the sport which he might not have picked up from his dad – such as creativity – may have come from Kevin Ingram, who raced regularly back to the early 1990s.

Now Daniel, who turns 39 at the end of August, consults racers in several divisions out of his Right Foot Down Motorsports shop in Brooksville, Fla. But his expertise in decorating race cars dates back farther than his knowledge in making them faster.

“My first job was when I was 16, working for Mike Bresnahan’s sign shop in Inverness,” Webster said. “Then I got a loan from my mom to buy the equipment and I had a sign shop for probably five years. Once all the digital printing stuff went more mainstream, I worked for Scotty Crockett, and his sponsor spent the money on the big printer laminate, so I ran that out of Scotty’s office for another eight years.”

That knowledge has come in handy for Webster, in front of several different audiences. His racing travels have taken him as far north as Anderson, Ind., but the bullring outside of Florida and Georgia which he has seen most often is Hickory Motor Speedway, home of the annual Throwback event on the zMax CARS Tour schedule. In two Throwback summer trips, Webster campaigned an #8 Budweiser Dale Earnhardt Jr. machine and a #33 Winston Jimmy Spencer look. He has also designed a sportsman car with another Earnhardt look, showing Wrangler livery.

This year’s Throwback Classic went on without Webster, but the schedule brought a more important opportunity for him to produce a tribute scheme. He stayed near home to compete in the inaugural Billy Joe Ingram Memorial Super Late Model race at Auburndale Speedway. Webster has spent plenty of afternoons and nights working alongside the Ingram family.

“I raced against Kevin when he was driving Supers in like 2009, and he kinda became one of my best friends,” Webster said. “I spent a lot of nights at his house when I worked at RaceCar Engineering and started driving his sportsman, the Z car, and won a ton of



Tyler Sontag/SpeedRacer Photos
Daniel Webster (left) is shown with longtime friend, racer and setup man Kevin Ingram and his brother Kelly Ingram (right). Webster ran a tribute wrap honoring their dad in last Saturday’s Billy Joe Ingram Memorial 154 at Auburndale Speedway in Winter Haven, Fla. Webster topped time trials and finished third.

races in that thing. Then in 2015 I worked for Chris Fontaine, and Kevin ran that deal for almost 20 years. I spent a lot of Monday mornings with Kevin and his dad; Mr. Ingram owned the buildings that Fontaine operated out of. He meant a lot to a lot of people.”

Those in the Ingram family – including Kevin’s mom Laverne, who was at Auburndale for part of the day – were floored with what Webster showed: an orange design with the elder Ingram’s #54 and a Coca-Cola logo.

“It was cool seeing people who did not know we were doing it getting cold chills when I went out on the track to qualify with that scheme on it,” Webster said. “Kevin asked me two weeks ago if I’d do this, and I was like, ‘Uh, yes, if you guys order a bunch of whatever color it is. I jumped on the computer to look at what the number looked like. I can’t let anyone else design my wraps; I know exactly what I want in my head, then I email it to Brian Dorer and all he has to do is hit print.”

Once inside the car for the 154-lap UARA National feature, all Webster had to do was to hit the gas pedal. Earlier in the day his Fury Race Car had a setup

fine-tuning from Florida mainstay Jesse Dutilly. Dutilly’s own car had an engine problem in the previous night’s practice and he withdrew, but he returned to serve as the #54’s crew chief and let Webster know just before time trials.

That qualifying effort was another big point of pride. Webster set fast time, giving his Ingram tribute another moment in the spotlight.

“I hadn’t been inside a car at Auburndale all year,” he said. “With not racing as much as anyone else, and not testing much, setting fast time is really cool. We tried for the go-to-the-rear bonus, and we had a shot at making it happen. When I got into third, the race went green for the last 35 laps or whatever. If the caution had come out, and if I could’ve kept (eventual winner Nick)

Neri boxed out and followed (runner-up and UARA points leader Michael) Atwell, then if Atwell breaks, I’m in the lead.”

His payday included more than \$2,000 for a third-place finish, plus \$500 for fast time and \$500 more as the hard charger. That was less than half of what Neri took home, but it was quite encouraging ... at least until Webster looked at what body panels needed repair and replacement after some first-half contact. The orange on the right rear quarter-panel looked as if it had a zipper on it with the dark duct tape.

“I think every wreck in the entire field happened directly in front of me,” Webster said. “Once I had it missed, and the car behind me hit me and I went into the grass to get away, and it was like the Titanic where I was bumping along this iceberg and scratched the fender. We tried at the halfway break to tape it back up. And the left side of the car looked like number 54,000, with all the donuts.”

Despite the damage, the entire outing was positive for Webster. It continued a good trend for him at the quarter-mile. His last three visits in street clothes found him on the winning side, twice with teenager Matthew Laprade in a truck class and once with Tim Sozio in a sportsman race.

Much of the bodywork on the #54 is still intact, and the orange had Webster looking toward the immediate future. It’s the color of the Reese’s cars which Kevin Harvick drove in NASCAR in the mid-2000s, so that was something to consider for this fall.

“We’ll definitely be at the Bigley,” he said about the Nov. 28-29 Bill Bigley Memorial big-money UARA show at the Freedom Factory in Bradenton, Fla. “My dad was talking about an old Marty Handshaw paint scheme; he was a Hialeah guy and Bobby Coyle drove for him for a bit. Somehow I’ve become the Throwback guy.”



Webster Race Cars collection
This was an entry of Billy Joe Ingram ride in 1978.
Kevin Ingram’s father passed away in 2023.

One Last Look

CARS Tour • Hickory Motor Speedway



FloRacing

Landon Huffman's Late Model Stock Car was voted the best appearing car at the Throwback Classic at Hickory Motor Speedway. This scheme was a tribute to the "Pink Cadillac" look which his father Robert Huffman used in early-1990s LMSC races.



FloRacing

The runner-up in online balloting for best appearing car at the annual zMax CARS Tour cornerstone event was the LMSC of Doug Barnes Jr. This look mirrored a Looney Tunes scheme used by Dale Earnhardt in a 2000 NASCAR Winston Cup Series race.



FloRacing

The top Pro Late Model in the voting was driven by Seth Christensen, harkening back to Alan Kulwicki's "Underbird" car. Christensen is one of this season's Kulwicki Driver Development Program finalists.



FloRacing

Dawson Sutton, in a Pro Late Model for Rackley WAR Racing which is rooted in the Nashville area, came with a wrap in tribute of Darrell Waltrip. NASCAR Hall of Fame driver Waltrip won Nashville track championships in 1970 and 1973.



FloRacing

Mason Diaz's LMSC entry honored chassis builder Jay Hedgecock.



FloRacing

Among the favorites were those paying tribute to racing relatives. Landon Shane Huffman (84) honored his dad and former Hickory mainstay Shane Huffman, Ronnie Bassett Jr. (44) honored his father, Layne Riggs (2) paid tribute to his dad Scott Riggs, and Michael Bumgarner (95) had a replica scheme of former track champion Keith Bumgarner. Two honored their late grandfathers: Cameron Clifford (35) for former Norway Speedway support-class champion Tim Faull, and Keelan Harvick (32) for John Paul Linville.



FloRacing

LMSC title contender Landen Lewis had a scheme like what Ron Hornaday Jr. used in his early-1990s NASCAR Southwest Series days. Hornaday is a mentor to Lewis, and he also gave an early boost to Kevin Harvick; Lewis drives for Kevin Harvick Inc.



One Last Look

Ontario Outlaw • Flamboro Speedway



DavidAllio.com

Shawn Chenoweth (89) and J.R. Fitzpatrick (84) split the spinning Josh Stade during the eighth annual Gold Rush event at Flamboro Speedway near Freelon, Ontario.



DavidAllio.com

Shawn Chenoweth was all smiles after leading all 125 laps for his fifth career Ontario Outlaw Late Model Series victory and first in the tour at Flamboro.



Koty Geyer/KG Media

Blake Childers finished second in this midweek Outlaw Late Model event for the second straight year.



Koty Geyer/KG Media

Jake Sheridan came home fourth in the Gold Rush, four days after his first Outlaw Late Model victory at Delaware Speedway.

One Last Look

ASA Midwest • Wisconsin International Raceway



Doug Hornickel/fastlapphoto.com

Luke Fenhaus signs autographs for fans at Wisconsin International Raceway in the afternoon. At the end of the night Fenhaus celebrated his second ASA Midwest Tour victory and first at this D-shaped half-mile facility.



Doug Hornickel/fastlapphoto.com

Luke Fenhaus (4) passes fast qualifier Levon VanDerGeest en route to a victory in the Tuesday race formerly known as the Dixieland 250.

Doug Hornickel/fastlapphoto.com
Austin Nason (14) races with Derek Kraus at Kaukauna, Wis. Nason wound up second in the 250; his best previous finishes in this event were fourths in 2015 and 2019-21. Kraus came home third, matching his result from the 2023 event.



Doug Hornickel/fastlapphoto.com

Gabe Sommers chats with his brother and spotter Max and his crew chief Travis Sauter (left). Sommers, the 2023-24 ASA Midwest Tour champion, had the lead with about 20 laps remaining in the Gandrud Auto Parts 250 but was shuffled back to fifth by the end.



Roy Ophime Photography

Nick Van took center stage after the Midwest Truck Series race, as he beat Brandon Reichenberger (right) and Grant Griesbach (left) in that 35-lapper. All three have Late Model experience, and Griesbach took the win in the TUNDRA Super Late Model Series season opener at WIR in May. Van's truck teammate Maxwell Schultz, a former WIR Super Late Model champion, led most of the first 25 laps in this race but then dropped back.