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Jonathan Mawhinney: On a Quest for a Championship

Roseville, CA - (July 13, 2010) - All American Speedway Late Model driver Jonathan Mawhinney, 19, is on several quests this year. He is hunting the NASCAR Whelen All American Series State Championship, as well as the NASCAR Whelen All American Series track championship at AAS. He currently sits in second place in both.

Mawhinney only started driving Late Models in 2008. He ran for Bill McAnally Racing for about 10 races, then he had his own car built and raced that for the remainder of the year. He finished runner-up three times, and was in the top-five 14 times. He earned four poles and the Most Improved Driver award. He finished 10th in the track point standings.

In 2009, he raced 29 races at All American Speedway and earned two poles, three Trophy Dash wins, 14 top-five finishes and 26 top-ten finishes. He also raced a West Car Late Model, where he tied for third place in the point standings.

This year Mawhinney has won two races, finished runner-up five times, and finished in the top-ten 10 times.

He did not grow up in a racing family, but when he was 12 years old, his father wanted to find a hobby for him. He tried racing a Bandelero car and was quite good at it, so he continued racing.

In 2003, his rookie year, he was the Bandelero champion at the Bull Ring in Las Vegas. In 2004, he moved to racing INEX Legend cars. In 2005, he was the INEX State Champion. He raced Legends until 2008, when he began his Late Model career. In 2008, he won all four INEX Pro Legend Class races he entered.

In 2005, Mawhinney and his team started thinking about traveling around in the Legends Series. They went to Carson City to race, right before the track was torn down. Then, when he started getting faster, they decided to go race at more tracks. They raced at Blyth, the Orange Show, Havasau, and then came to Roseville before it was re-configured.

Mawhinney said at that time a lot of the old time racers from Legends of the Pacific were still racing. "I gained a lot of confidence as far as my driving abilities racing with them," he said. "I won the Legends race at Roseville the first time I raced there, and I raced against Joel Courage and Frankie Marks." He also won at the Orange Show that same year.

His quest for winning the NASCAR Whelen State Championship is strong. "You don't see a lot of drivers between the ages of 18-20 win a State Championship," he said. "But

when they have, big opportunities have come their way."

He is hoping to race some SRL, and some NASCAR K&N Pro Series races next year, but funding is a problem. "I want to get out more in the public eye," he said.

Part of Mawhinney's racing agenda is to give back to the communities he races in. One thing he does is go to Shriner's Hospital and visit with the kids there. "Anything I can do to give back to people," he said.

He has also become a vocal advocate for automotive safety as a result of the death of his friend and fellow racer, Spencer Clark. Clark, who had raced in the NASCAR K&N Pro Series, Super Late Models, and once started in a NASCAR Busch Series race at Las Vegas, was a passenger in the truck that was hauling his All Star Showdown car back from Charlotte, NC to California when the driver lost control in Albuquerque, NM. Clark went through the windshield and died. He was not wearing a seatbelt. "It was really hard," Mawhinney said. "He was like my brother, and I was like a second son to his father. Now I go to schools and talk about safety, about always wearing your seatbelt."

He loves racing at All American Speedway in Roseville. "It is a great track with great competition," he said. He wants to thank his crew, car owner and dad Matt Mawhinney, crew chief Thomas Martin, and crewmember Jake Kones. He also wants to thank his sponsors, FastSigns of Elk Grove, Pasta Village, Cascading Falls, Contractors State License Services, Sylvan Trailer & Supply of Citrus Heights, Any Auto Repair of Rocklin, Wayside Lumber, Christian Rods & Customs, River City Chapter, Java Jungle Cafe of Roseville, and Star Racing Supply.

Mawhinney hopes to go to college soon and study civil engineering and music production. He loves music.

He will be racing at All American Speedway on Saturday, July 24, 2010. For more information on Mawhinney, go to: www.jmracing17.com. For more information on All American Speedway and for tickets, go to: www.allamericanspeedway.com

PHOTOS: Jonathan Mawhinney. Photo: Jeannie Brousal