

# Last Lap Pass at Thunderbird's MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge Nets Chad Blonde Weekend Sweep



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*D Announcer Matt Prieur interviews Thunderbird winner Chad Blonde*

Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP made their only 2017 appearance at Thunderbird Raceway and Chad Blonde took the win in the MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge 25-lap feature in front of an enthusiastic, full house.



Just like the night before, hot, windy weather challenged Thunderbird Raceway owner/promoter Tom Sprague to give racers a good track, and even with an 11:0 PM curfew, Sprague was up to the challenge.

The night started out with Andy Chowski getting into the turn two wall in the first qualifying session and flipping hard; extensive damage ended his night. Robert Huisken caught the wall in just about the same spot in his qualifying session and also flipped; Robert was able to make repairs before the feature.

Steve Irwin (Engler Machine & Tool heat) and Thomas Schinderle (COMP Cams heat) won the Lane Automotive/MSD Ignition Fast Master awards as fast qualifiers in their respective heat race qualifying sessions.

Blonde used his outside front row starting position to take an easy win in the Engler Machine & Tool heat race over Joe Swanson. Gregg Dalman also made good use of his second place starting position in the COMP Cams heat race to take the win over Thomas Schinderle.

Thomas Schinderle started on the pole of the feature and jump out to a quick lead. As expected, it didn't take the leaders long to get into traffic on the racy  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile oval. Once in

traffic, second place starter Irwin challenged Schinderle several times but couldn't pull off a pass for the lead. The race ran caution-free until lap twenty for a spin in turn 3 by Ricky Ferkel. It turned out to be the major turning point in the race as Schinderle, who was enjoying a several car length lead over Irwin and a straight away lead over Blonde, who started eighth, saw his advantage disappear for the restart.

38-year-old Blonde, the veteran driver from Litchfield, Michigan, in his #5B Flint Truck Service/Maxim Chassis/Krieger Racing Engines ride, went to the top side of Tom Schinderle and a lapped car going into turn one on the white flag lap to make the winning pass. Schinderle settled for second with current points leader and 2001 Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP Champion, Stevie Irwin, Joe Swanson and 1999 SOD Champion, Dain Naida completing the top five.

**Qualifying** – Lane Automotive/MSD Ignition Fast Masters \$50 each

Group	Time	#	Driver
Engler Machine & Tool Heat	12.175	0	Steve Irwin
COMP Cams Heat	14.018	41	Thomas Schinderle

**Heat Races** – Winners \$100 each

Engler Machine & Tool Heat #1			
	#	Driver	Contingency
1	5B	Chad Blonde	
2	7J	Joe Swanson	Kistler Racing Products
3	0	Steve Irwin	Racing Optics
4	17x	Dain Naida	
5	11	Trey Smith	

6	77	Andrew Scheid	
7	1a	Mark Aldrich	
8	8	Justin Ward	

COMP Cams Heat #2			
	#	Driver	Contingency
1	49T	Gregg Dalman	
2	41	Thomas Schinderle	Allstar Performance
3	21T	Troy Chehowski	Racing Optics
4	47	Robert Bullock	
5	10J	Chris Jones	
6	91L	Alexis Adgate	
7	81	Ricky Ferkel	

**Feature**

	#	Driver	Difference	Contingencies
1	5B	Chad Blonde	–	Rod End Supply
2	41	Thomas Schinderle	0.686	Rod End Supply
3	0	Steve Irwin	1.510	Rod End Supply
4	7J	Joe Swanson	2.881	Schoenfeld Headers
5	17x	Dain Naida	4.539	ATL Racing Fuel Cells
6	49T	Gregg Dalman	7.806	
7	77	Andrew Scheid	8.889	Allstar Performance

8	21T	Troy Chehowski	9.934	
9	47	Robert Bullock	11.355	King Racing Products
10	1a	Mark Aldrich	-1 lap	
11	10J	Chris Jones	-1 lap	Keizer Aluminum Wheels
12	46	Robert Huisken	-1 lap	
13	81	Ricky Ferkel	-1 lap	
14	8	Justin Ward	-1 lap	
15	91L	Alexis Adgate	-3 laps	
16	58	Tony Bures	-24 laps	
17	11	Trey Smith	-25 laps	
18	20A	Andy Chehowski	DNS	

KSE Racing Products Hard Charger – Chad Blonde (+7)

BR Motorsports Contingency (feature top 10 draw) – Andrew Scheid

DMI (Diversified Machine) Contingency (feature 12-16 draw) – Robert Huisken

Perfit Corporation Lucky Dog – Dain Naida

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