



Chicago, September 14, 2009, NASA Midwest, Inc.

Gingerman Raceway/September 4-5, 2009/NASA Midwest-Great Lakes
Crossover

NASA 944 Spec Gingerman Race Report:

NASA and the 944 Spec Drivers finally enjoyed a full weekend without a drop of rain, and enjoyed beautiful weather for their penultimate event. Track conditions were surprisingly greasy in the heat. Along with the technical layout of Gingerman, conditions led to drivers chasing the tail ends of their cars all weekend, several no-contact spins, and a lot of work on set-up changes.

The first race got out to a busy start, with Ray Freundt and Andy Berberich getting through traffic well, moving pole sitter Kuhns to third. Following Berberich closely, Kuhns ran a bit wide hitting a large pothole in the outside curbing. This bent the left front rim, knocked 12PSI of air pressure out of the tire and bent the camber plate on that side. Assessing that the vibration was not getting worse and the car felt tight, Kuhns pushed on. Freundt got shuffled back through the order, leaving Berberich & Kuhns in a 3 car battle with a GTS-1 944 in between them for many laps. In a stroke of good fortune for Kuhns, the GTS 944 and Berberich spun in separate incidents on the same lap, leaving Kuhns to inherit the lead, and gratefully nurse his wounded 944 home to the win. Berberich, in turn, was especially grateful for the 20z bottle of Gatorade he got waiting in impound, when his car came in 1 pound over the class minimum! After his own spin, Freundt came in 3rd, with Angel Blazquez, who shadowed the lead group most of the race, finished 4th. Michael Palmer continued his clean and consistent racing to round out the order.

Sunday dawned cooler, with better track conditions, allowing Kuhns to peel off a blistering 1:37.8 lap time in warm up, well over a second under the track record. Apparently giddy from the success of the morning, Kuhns was soon humbled by a spectacular multi-rotation spin going out on cold tires in qualifying on the first lap of qualifying. Berberich got his setup more dialed in to take fast time in qualifying. A predetermined grid inversion mixed up the field, putting the Bennington Motorsports/944 Raceworks car piloted by Michael Palmer on pole. This time it was Kuhns who worked traffic well, and pulled out to an early lead. The repairs to Kuhns' camber plate by Nick of Bennington Motorsports & Jim Hartman held up well, and Kuhns managed to stay out of trouble this time, with no off-track excursions, and notched his second win of the weekend. Freundt & Berberich had an epic battle for third, with multiple passes between them. A spin from Berberich (seemed to be a theme at this track!) left Freundt to finish second. Freundt was later DQ'd due to a technicality, moving Berberich up to second.



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Once again, all cars entered this weekend started all the races. Out of 80 race starts this year, only a single race has been missed by a 944 Spec driver (who's car suffered a clutch failure). This is quite a testament to the cars, driving, and support from Bennington Motorsports over this year. Kuhns & Berberich have essentially tied up the points, with Berberich holding a 5 point unadjusted points lead, and Kuhns a 10 point lead when drops are considered. Freundt & Blasquez are in a battle for third in the points. The championship will come down to the final race weekend at Putnam Park, which will mark the end to what has been a spectacular, and highly competitive season in NASA Midwest 944 Spec!

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