

MATLOCK

Racing



Wayne Matlock Round #5

Lucas Oil Regional Series Race Report

Well, one more Lucas Oil race in the books and I'm now tied for first with my series rival and long time friend Steve Beilman. I went into this race feeling good after the way my car was working at the last round other than the rear wheel falling off. I got there a little late for practice on Friday and got my pit setup pretty fast with the help of Bob Bell, Steve Beilman, and Kory Ellis. Once I got the car through tech I was ready to head out on the track. I suited up and headed over to staging to wait for my turn. Normally it would not have been that bad but this time it was 108 degrees outside and I was sitting in a hot car with a black driving suit and a flat black helmet on. They might not have been the best color choice for a racing series in So Cal in the summer, but it sure does look cool. Once out on the track I was having a blast in the Can-Am. Bob Bell from Precision Concepts has my Elka Stage 5 shocks dialed in better than any UTV on the track. It is so much fun to drive when you can back the thing into turns and leave it pinned over huge jumps knowing it's all going to be ok. We didn't even make it around the track

one lap and there was a caution flag out. It seems my friend Dave Nagy came out of the gate like a race horse and he flipped it in turn one. Once practice went green again it was back to trying to find where the good lines were and having fun.

With Friday practice over Saturday brought us race day and the same blazing temps. When it was time to qualify we all headed over to staging and waited for our time on the track. Once we were all out on the track I spent the first of six laps finding out where the slippery mud was and then I was going to put the hammer down. I gave a bit of a gap between Beilman and I...then it was on. Everything was working great and I was feeling good about my lap time until right before the end, bam, a yellow flag came out. As I rounded the corner there was Greg Row on his side, the yellow stayed out for two laps then it was back to green again. I gave myself another gap between me and Beilman and then I tried to lay down a good couple of laps. I ended up catching Beilman and had a little battle with him and was able to make a pass right before I started the next lap. I was hitting everything the way I wanted to and was feeling good and then again with the yellow flag. I was feeling confident about my lap time and qualifying when I headed back to the pits. About 15 minutes after qualifying was over I headed over to scoring to check out the times and it seems that the race horse (Dave Nagy) figured out how far he could push his car during his soil sample and backed it down just enough to stay upright and set the fastest lap. I was a little deflated and yet motivated, the bad news is I qualified in third the good news is I only lost first by 2 one-hundredths of a second and the other good news is the top five cars all qualified within 1 second so there was sure to be some good racing.

Now it was race time and I was feeling confident that I could pull off a win. It was Dave Nagy on the pole for the first time and another guy next to him that came from the WORCS series. I was behind Dave and Beilman was to my right. We had discussed leaving a gap between our class and the SR1's during the parade lap. What was unclear to some was when they should hit the throttle and start racing. When the pace truck pulled off the track I knew it was go time and was ready for the green flag to drop. As we were rounding turn 4 my spotter Steve Smith yelled out GREEN!!! GREEN!!! But Dave did not go. I waited for a second and the trophy carts behind us started to pass us and I said to hell with that and hit the gas because as far as I knew a race had started and I did not know what the holdup was. So I turned to the inside of Dave and left. I went from third to first and everything was great. I was feeling good and driving my own race and keeping an eye on Dave in my rear view mirror now and then. Around the third lap the car was starting to handle funny and lost a little drive out of the turns I thought it was due to the track drying out and getting too much traction with my Maxxis tires. I getting worried about Dave behind me now as he was catching me little by little and there did not seem to be much I could do about it. On the fourth lap he closed the gap in turn three and came up beside me coming out of the turn going into the rollers, my car was a handful in the rollers but I kept the throttle mashed to the floor and when I came out of them I was a little wide into turn four and Dave got by me. I pulled in behind him and stuck to his bumper waiting for him to make a mistake but he was hooked up. After two laps I came in hot into turn three trying to pressure him and when I hit the gas the car did a right hand spin and I was against the wall, not figuratively but actually against the wall. I put the car into reverse and backed away from the wall all the while getting passed by third. When the mandatory caution came out we grouped back up and I was going to try and make a move on the restart. It went green and there was not much I could

do, the car was still a hand full and a little slow out of the turns. I pushed as hard as I could but to no evil, I even set my fastest lap time on the last lap but I was stuck in third.

After the race there was a little dust up in our pits as to the start of the race because some thought I jumped the start. I told them I even waited a couple seconds but It was green so I took the shot. With the threat of thunder storms we loaded up quickly and headed home. I was a little bummed about getting third in the race and about what happened afterward. Once home I unloaded my car and then it became apparent why my car was a handful and a little slow out of the turns. I broke the stub axle inside the front dif on the right hand side. So that made me feel a little better about my performance and third place.

I would like to thank all the people that help me get to the races and the people that help me at the races. First off Alba Racing for doing such an amazing job building and prepping the car. Bob Bell for getting my car working awesome and then Steve Smith for taking his time to come out and do whatever needs to be done on the car or in the pits I had the cleanest car on the line and I did not touch it that was all Steve Smith. And most of all I would like to thank my wife. She does so much including chasing two wild little boys in 108 degree heat. You guys are awesome and I really appreciate you.

Thank you to all of my sponsors. Without them none of this would be possible.

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