

Sitterly Wins Second Classic in One-Two Finish for Nicotra Racing

OSWEGO, N.Y. – September 5, 2011 – In 2009, following a smooth, consistent run to the Oswego Speedway track championship, Otto Sitterly won his first Budweiser International Classic 200 in convincing fashion.

On Sunday, after an emotionally draining, seesaw season that boasted as many lows as it did highs, Sitterly claimed his second Classic crown in dramatic fashion.

Behind the wheel of the newest of John Nicotra Racing's three equally pristine Hawk Jr supermodifieds, Sitterly rallied late in the 55th running of the most prestigious supermodified race, passing teammate-for-a-day Mike Lichty in turn three of the final lap to capture the \$15,000 winner's share.

Lichty, driving the Nicotra No. 6 that's normally wheeled in the Classic by Indy 500 veteran Davey Hamilton, hung in the top five all day and proved he's as talented in non-winged supermodified racing as he is on the winged ISMA circuit.

After qualifying and starting second, the Canadian began to make his presence known around lap 140 when he passed Sitterly for third and then moved by pole-sitter and top lap leader Randy Ritskes for second on lap 165.

Sitterly shot past Ritskes a few laps later and the teammates then set their sights on leader Ray Graham Jr., who had run unchallenged out front after overtaking Ritskes for the top spot on lap 130.

With 20 laps to go, Otto found a lane around Lichty as the Canadian hounded Graham for the lead. It took Otto only a few laps to race past Graham, who was trying to win the season's two most prestigious non-winged supermodified races after his Mr. Supermodified feature victory in August.

But heavy lap traffic blocked Sitterly's bid to gap his challengers as Lichty and Graham battled wheel to wheel directly behind Otto while he attempted to negotiate the lappers.

The race changed on lap 185 when Graham, utilizing the top groove between turns three and four, appeared to make contact with Sitterly's right rear. The contact sent the Des Moines, Iowa, resident hard into the Big O's steel fence, ending his day after a strong bid for his first Classic title.

Lichty made it past Otto when Graham went into the wall, which set up a seven-lap shootout between the G&I Homes-sponsored teammates.

Sitterly used all seven laps to find his way back by Lichty. Only a half lap from glory, Lichty chose to run low down the back straightaway to protect the bottom. His choice opened the top for Sitterly, who raced hard into turn three and around Lichty in a

patented outside move Oswego fans have seen so many times from the blue Nicotra No. 7 over the last half decade. This time, it was a move that gave Sitterly his second Classic triumph in three years.

“Once we got in the open, I could tell that (my competitors) probably better have been saving (their cars) because I felt like I could catch pretty much anybody. So I knew that either they were saving it or we were really good,” Sitterly said after the victory.

“I saw Louie Cicconi tapping the rail and telling Mikey (Lichty) to keep it low,” Otto added, speaking of the last laps of the race. “And Mikey may have kept it just a little too low for what he needed to do. That last lap I went to roll the outside of him I didn’t know if I was going to do a crossover or what, but when I got along side of him I banged the throttle once and went for it. The sparks would have flown before I would have not gassed it up. I wasn’t going to let him get away.”

Lichty earned the one, two sweep for Nicotra, an accomplishment nearly had in ’09 when Hamilton made a late-race bid for second before crashing with Doug Didero.

“Once he showed me a wheel I had all the wheel I could into it and it just drove straight up to the fence,” Lichty said while recalling the last lap. “I could have run him up into the fence and came out with the win but I’d rather see a one, two finish for John (Nicotra) and everybody. They put a lot of effort into this.”

Multi-time ISMA champion Chris Perley wheeled a third Nicotra racer and wound up an impressive sixth after starting the 200-lap grind in 19th. Perley, who made some tremendous moves while racing hard with several drivers, drove a car numbered 5, the mount Otto wrecked hard in the Mr. Supermodified race only a few weeks ago.

Originally thought to be a write-off, Joe Hawksby Jr. of Hawk Jr Chassis, Sitterly and the Nicotra team worked tirelessly throughout the latter stages of August and opening days of September to repair the car in time for the Classic. The work paid off as Nicotra cars represented three of the top-six finishing positions.

“Last week when we wrecked and tore up some sheet metal we were bummed out, and at that point, I gathered all the guys and said ‘Now I want three (cars) here.’” Nicotra said after the Classic. “I wanted to show these guys what Otto and his team are all about and I wanted three here. I didn’t care if we raced two, but I wanted to roll out three shiny, new, bad son of a guns. Everybody did a great job and it’s a true team effort.”

The win not only marked Sitterly’s second but also Nicotra’s second as a car owner in his five years as a supermodified headman.

The Sitterly-Nicotra tandem now has two Classic wins, three track championships and 12 Oswego super feature wins. The win gives Otto 20 supermodified wins and moves him into a three-way tie with Canadians Warren Coniam and Ken Andrews for 14th on the all-time Oswego super win list.

About Nicotra Racing

Nicotra Racing is sponsored by G&I Homes, Inc., 5 Brothers Produce, Burnac Produce Limited, Provincial Fruit Co., S&L Beans, Florida Vegetable, Flavor First, V.L. Walker Co., Georgia Crate & Basket, Rite-Pak Produce, Quality First Produce, Magnolia Packing, Beaver River Distribution and N&N Corporation.

For more information on Nicotra Racing, visit www.NicotraRacing.com or email john@nicotraracing.com.

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