

***Texas AI/CMC Racers Trek to No Problem Raceway
By Todd Covini***

Just another stop on the "AI/CMC Nationwide Tour", the Texas boys and girls headed east anywhere from 300 to 600 miles to Belle Rose, Louisiana on June 11 & 12th to show their V8 stuff for Round 3 of the Texas Championship. Tropical storm Arlene threatened to postpone the weekend races (at press time, Hurricane Katrina had since taken its toll), however the skies opened up and a beautiful weekend of racing was had by all.



Photo by Holly Donovan

Friday practice went fairly well with everyone learning the new "away" track for the first time. Saturday morning qualifying brought some early trouble when the AIX Camaro of John Brannan lost his exhaust during a spin. The chunk of exhaust flew up directly into Corey Reuth's 3-day old CMC windshield, destroying it. Fortunately, no one was hurt in the incident and a used replacement was installed in short order thanks to everyone in the paddock pitching in to help. Texas "Coopetition" at it's best!



Photo by Todd Covini

Tires, brakes, windshields and (oddly enough) trailer tires to and from the event took a serious beating on this AI/CMC race weekend. Despite the higher than usual consumption of parts & equipment, the racers, track management and local Louisiana spectators went nuts over our American V8 racing at this former plantation racetrack.



Photo by Holly Donovan

All the "rookies" really stepped it up and gave the veterans a serious run. Corey Reuth took his first win in CMC....Glenn Landrum sat on the CMC podium every race...Mitch Warren raced up front and took home a few CMC podiums and the CMC cars driven by Nick Runyan and Jeff Burch were inside 1 second of the front runners most of the weekend. In AI, rookie Jeff Brooks installed some new horsepower thanks to Chris Lyon's pre-owned engine and propelled himself to his first AI podium finish.

Saturday's qualifying session brought Mike Patterson's Camaro to the AI pole position and Eric Varner's Mustang to the CMC Pole position for Race 1 of 4 on this Bayou Circuit weekend. After some fierce battles were had, the Race 1 finishing order in AI was George, Patterson and Brooks and the finishing order in CMC was Varner, Covini and Landrum.



Photo by Todd Covini

Race 2 was an inverted start based upon the finishing order of Race 1. In the end the podium people were George, Patterson and Pedersen in AI and Varner, Warren and Landrum in CMC.



Photo by Todd Covini

In true Texas AI/CMC fashion, Saturday night's "Dinner for 32" at a nearby restaurant was a huge success. Every AI/CMC racer and crewmember made it for the occasion 30 minutes from the track regardless of where they were staying and lots of fun, food & laughter was had by all!

On Sunday morning it was time to get back to business and return to qualifying. Mike Patterson took home a repeat pole position of the weekend in AI and Glenn Landrum achieved his first pole position of his career in CMC.



Photo by Todd Covini

Race 3 brought the familiar John George and Mike Patterson shootout. While Patterson had proven he was faster with 2 pole positions of the weekend, he had yet to win a race. In the end it was George, Patterson and Pedersen on the AI podium...In CMC, the finishing order was Reuth, Landrum and Varner.



Photo by Todd Covini

Race 4 finishing order was George, Brooks, Patterson in AI while in CMC Varner, Landrum and Warren were on the podium. Kudos to Jeff Brooks on his first podium finish - well deserved!



Photo by Holly Donovan

Many congrats to our weekend winners John George (AI) who swept all 4 races and Eric Varner (CMC) who took 3 wins and rookie Corey Reuth (CMC) who took his first win. Also congrats to John George and Eric Varner for setting the NPR track records for AI and CMC with a 1:20:319 and 1:24:381 respectively.

