



## 4<sup>th</sup> Place at Southern National Raceway

**Kirila Race Update 8-18-08**

Author: Ginger Kirila

With a top 5 and making headway to getting the win the Kirila Gorilla racing team is pumped up! Gene finished the 100 lap race at Southern National Raceway with a 4<sup>th</sup> place finish last Saturday night in Kenly, NC.

The weekend began with practice on Friday and Kirila's #05 was the fastest car on the track. After several rounds of practices that day, the crew saw smoke coming from the rear of the car and Gene brought the car off the track with a blown engine. It was a big disappointment to say the least. The team's plans were to pack up and head home.

Word got around the track and the owner of the Southern National Raceway, Del Richards, wanted to make sure the Kirila Gorilla team ran in the Kickin' Asphalt 210, Super Late Model Division on Saturday night.

Del Richards' generosity to our team was way beyond what we ever expected. He loaned us a new motor so that we could race on Saturday night! The generosity of Steve Howell, from Howell Racing Products in Pikeville, NC was also above and beyond by providing us with his shop so that our team, Tony, Chris and Marty (Moon Pie) could tear out the old motor and put in the new one. The crew worked much of the night to complete the engine swap and had the car ready to race Saturday.

Saturday night began with a good qualifying run to place the #05 car in 6<sup>th</sup> place to start the 100 lap feature. Within the first 13 laps, there were several cautions and Gene struggled on the restarts due to his crate engine which has less horsepower compared to the rest of the field's custom motors.

By lap 17, the #05 was shuffled back to 9<sup>th</sup> place with a lot of ground to make up. The next 50 laps were all green flag laps and Gene got into a good rhythm to race his car all the way up to 4<sup>th</sup> place.

During the last 33 laps, there were several more cautions and after each restart, the #05's crate motor would permit 2 or 3 cars to sneak by, but once he got rolling, he passed more cars than anyone.

The #05 did an awesome job to keep his top spot and take the checkered in 4<sup>th</sup> place. Gene proved to be a fan-favorite as the 15 year old was battling door to door with some Wiley 30 year old veterans who were repetitive track champions. This was happening right in the heart of the toughest racing in the south. With both the racing excitement as well as the historic Southern National track where so many former racing greats got their start you have one proud race team.



It was a truly successful weekend for the team and we cannot express our gratitude enough to both Del Richards and Steve Howell who made it possible for the Kirila Gorilla team to race!!

We would like to ask our fans to take a minute and extend a thank you to Del, via email, for giving us the opportunity to race on Saturday night.

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Thanks so much to all of you – our devoted race fans - for your constant and continued support!!