

KIRILA “THE GORILLA” DOES THE SPIN AND WIN IN YOUNG LIONS

Many drivers have won a race while having trouble sometime throughout the event. Few drivers have spun their car out and came back to the victory. Then-CART driver Danny Sullivan has the most popular “spin and win” victory in racing when he spun and won the Indianapolis 500 in 1985.

In the Legends nation, Gene “The Gorilla” Kirila didn’t plan on trying to repeat Sullivan’s feat. Starting on the outside pole of the Young Lions race, Kirila came to the green flag looking to stay up near the front of the field. The combination of a very wet track and getting on the gas too hard sent Kirila’s #5 car into the grass as the green flag flew.



Gene "The Gorilla" Kirila did his best Danny Sullivan impersonation by spinning and winning. (LN Photo)

“I wasn’t really used to the track,” said Kirila. “With the rain out there it’s real slippery. I kind of matted the gas a little too much and spun it sideways. I went to the infield and got it going. Luckily, we had a caution and I got it back up to speed so we could get it up there.”

Kirila spent the majority of the race working his way back up towards the front of the pack. After avoiding a few spins by some of the lead lap cars, Kirila found himself in a battle for the lead with Tyler Millwood. Millwood’s team made a choice right before the race started to help him move up through the field to the lead, attempting to hold off Kirila.

“I actually put on some rain tires,” said Millwood. “I asked my dad to go get them and put them on about five minutes before we went out and it paid off for us.

“I was just trying to keep the #5 car (Kirila) behind me. The car just kept getting slicker. It was just a matter of how hard you could get it in there and how hard you could get on the brakes to make the car turn is the big thing.”

After taking the white flag, Millwood and Kirila approached a stopped car sitting on the inside groove of the track with no caution being thrown by officials. Both drivers had to drive around the stalled car in the very wet and slick outside groove. Once the leaders made it by, the yellow flag was displayed, forcing the drivers to race back to the win.



Tyler Millwood and Gene Kirila had to avoid a car parked on the track during the last lap. (LN Photo)

“It was fun between the #31 (Millwood) and I,” said Kirila. “We went back and forth and on the last lap. I saw the wrecked car and I figured I’d take the high side. They told us to race back to the checkered since we had already gotten the white flag. He seemed to have checked up a little. I got passed him on the last lap and it was a fun race.”

Millwood looked to have the race win in his grasp, but the stalled car in the groove on the last lap without a caution being thrown allowed Kirila to get around him, shoving him back to second place.

“That’s what messed me up right there,” said Millwood. “I just pushed up trying to avoid him and I should have just stayed hooked to the bottom as far as I could. I just ran down in there and he kind of gave me a little bump to move me up out of the way. He got around me so we will just go back after him next weekend.” Even though there might have been a little controversy on the final lap, Kirila was happy to take his second trophy of the season.

“This is just awesome,” said Kirila. “We had a win two weeks ago. This is unbelievable to win two weeks here now