

(For Immediate Release)

Lewis Claims First Ever ARCA West Sanctioned LMCS Event

AW LMCS MEDIA

Graham, Wash. (May 6, 2007) Twenty-nine of the region's best Late Model drivers helped launch a new era in Northwest racing, but Gary Lewis of Bothell WA earned bragging rights by winning the first-ever Late Model Challenge Series event sanctioned under ARCA / ARCA West. Gary skillfully maneuvered his car thru the caution plagued first fifty laps of the season opening 'Apple Blossom 125' event at Wenatchee Valley's Super Oval tight & fast ¼-mile bullring. Crossing the finish line first, Gary netted over \$3,200.00 in winnings, including a \$2,500.00 'Winner's Check' presented by Pro Pack Motorsports. But once the winnings are spent, Gary still retains the bragging rights.

The ARCA West Late Model Challenge Series participants and spectators were blessed with beautiful Wenatchee Valley sunny weather. But as the sun dropped over the snow covered hilltops nearby the temperature dropped significantly possibly lending to some of the carnage that began in the feature event as soon as the initial green flag was waived. Jeff Jefferson (Yakima WA) and Shelby Thompson (Spokane WA) led the cars to the start after an eight car invert. Accelerating hard out of turn four with the drop of the green, both seemed to get loose with Shelby's car getting sideway as they crossed the line setting off a multi-car incident. Shelby and several additional cars were collected in the mêlée, including Garret Evans (E. Wenatchee WA) and Wes Rhodes (Yelm, WA). Evan's and Thompson's night was done, but Rhodes was able to return later in the event.

On the complete restart, Jefferson was on the pole with Lewis outside. Lewis made his move early, grabbing the lead by first laps end, and stayed there leading the field from green to checkers. Jefferson made some good attempts, but Lewis defended his position well, working his way professionally through lap traffic as many of the other drivers finally got settled in after a caution-filled first 54 laps (8 cautions for 16 laps). The field then ran laps 54 thru 125 caution-free. 14 cars finished the event with the top seven remaining on lead lap.

Brent Harris was top qualifier posting a 12.803 time, but his efforts were plagued by brake issues finishing several laps down. Kevin Richards and Mark Owens both experienced engine problems. Steven Howard, Eric Hargraves, Christian Roeder, and Troy Eaton were involved in accidents. Chad Holaday was black flagged for passing to the left on a restart and elected to park the car.

Top-10 in ARCA West LMCS 'Apple Blossom 125': 1st - Gary Lewis, 2nd - Jeff Jefferson, 3rd – Jason Hedrick (Spanaway WA), 4th-Joe Constance (Mukilteo WA), 5th – Terry Halverson (E. Wenatchee WA), 6th – Shane Mitchell (Wenatchee WA), 7th - Rick Thompson (Prosser WA), 8th - Mark Berriau (Penticton BC), 9th – Darren Rupinski (Hayden ID), 10th – Brent Harris (E. Wenatchee WA).

The ARCA West Truck put on a feisty race, with brothers Steve & Rick Thompson of the Tri-City area dueling for the checkers. Rick got the win with Steve finishing second, followed by rookie Daniel Moore of Snohomish, WA. 4th – Jerry Chester (Prosser WA), 5th – Mike Clark (Graham, WA), 6th – Scott Dannen (Dewy, AZ), 7th – Duke Langley (Umatilla, OR).

The next race for both the ARCA West LMCS & Trucks is at Yakima Speedway on May 19th. Please visit www.LateModelChallenge.com for the latest series news and racing information.