Beat: Sports

The Day Dirt Died!

How Dirt Track Racing Has Been Seduced

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USPA NEWS - There is a definitive "sweet spot" of Dirt Track Racing Media Coverage. NASCAR should be used as dirt's cautionary tale of what happens when you miss the sweet spot and stop giving fans incentive to get out to the track but instead pay a Media Production Company for their Live Streams of video and audio as we let the community of racing slowly die. We are in a new world of media coverage, it's time to use it for the betterment of the sport and our tracks instead of using it to propel a select few media outlets at the expense of the survival of dirt. Read on...

Leading providers of Dirt Track Racing Pay-Per-View Events as well as Live Audio/Video Streams have been seducing us based on statistics from the early 2000's. They are stating that PPV draws only 1-2% of race fans within an hour of any given track that they otherwise would attend but instead choose to stay at home and tune in to a live audio or video broadcast, paying their money to said National Racing Broadcast network as opposed to much needed local track owners and sponsors. In actuality the current percentage of race fans that, according the the most recent poll by an nationally recognized racing news source finds that over 7% of the racing community within an hours drive of any given track would choose to stay home and listen/view current production companies broadcasts of the night's events. Folks that's an increase of 6% in a decade! Why contribute to a slow death?

Consider this paragraph as the Mission statement of JDLawsonMedia and C.A.M. (The Central Alliance of Media). In this ever-changing world of sports media coverage there is a definitive "sweet spot" of dirt track racing coverage that warrants immediate attention. NASCAR is to be used in this article as the cautionary tale. When we look at the stands of the most publicly visible form of racing in North America, NASCAR, we see more empty seats than occupied. What wonderful things the current state of such technologically wondrous forms of camera angles and live coverage have done for the sport right? They've missed the "sweet spot". There is a misperceived "pinnacle" of racing media coverage. NASCAR has been apparently striving way ahead of dirt track racing in it's advancements when in actuality we are closer to the sweet spot if we become self-aware NOW.

Social Media is HUGE, yes but it has strayed down the wrong path in it's promotion of PPV. Example: The Chili Bowl... this is an event that has become an international attraction in the world of dirt track racing. It's current popularity is undeniable. However, this popularity and veiwership is in no way due to PPV. It's due to it's "community" and what is the current most efficient and popular form of "community"?...Social Media. So, do we use Social Media to pump our PPV website events? No, we use it to build the community that originally built the popularity of such a spectacle as the Chili Bowl. We form groups, we discuss, we contribute...we DON'T SELL OUT! This is a call upon all local media sources to step up our games, unite and put our entrepreneurial spirits to good use to promote our local tracks and each other!

Let us take into account local sponsorship. Many of us, myself included, sponsor a local race team be it Modifieds, Sprints, what have you...do we actually reap a return on investment for those sponsorship dollars? If we market ourselves properly, perhaps. But why are we falling for the bamboozlement of the sales job "But we're helping to promote your track, your race team, your business" when a good portion of the promotion they are providing is from National viewership that has absolutely no return on your investment as a local business or team. It's a sham that is being milked at the highest levels right now and it is helping to keep that empty seat next to you at your favorite track...empty.

So "What can I do as a fan?" you may ask. Well you can start by not supporting those websites that promote their PPV, Live Audio and Live Video broadcasts and streams to NON-SELL-OUT events. There are those that will no doubt discredit my call to action with pleas to remember those sweet memories next to the living room fire watching PPV coverage of the Chili Bowl. I am not speaking of those such events. I am speaking of events such as Live Audio Coverage without compensation to the track of which I have documentable proof.

The absolute Irony? A man revered by his local racing community Co-Founds a show that talks about "track". A show that showcases and highlights the deep, rich, historical racing heritage of Kansas City. Upon his untimely death, for his many contributions to the racing family in KC he has an Award named after him that belongs to a racing club with a 65 year history. The surviving Co-Founder of

said National Radio/Talk Show then uses his platform to demean the recipient of the Tom Wilson Media Person of the Year Award. He then responds to the revered Kirk Elliot with a dismissive "Is it?" when Kirk states what a great honor it is to receive the Award bearing Tom's name. "Is it?"...those two words speak volumes.

Meanwhile, back in the dirt with the rest of us. The C.A.M. Central Alliance of Media will see you at your local C.A.R.B. supporting track in 18'! If you have any questions on where media coverage of dirt track racing is to go if the sport is to survive, you can find more information at JDLawsonMedia on Facebook or visit us at JDLawsonMedia.USPA24.com, Hometown News Print Publications or any of our affiliated sites!

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