



Unseasonably warm temperatures greeted the #86 team as they arrived at Flamboro Speedway for the Grisdale Triple Crown as part of the Frostoberfest weekend and the final race of the season. The team was feeling confident heading into the weekend as they had made some setup changes in the shop over the past couple of weeks and were anxious to see what the results would be.

Billy went out for the first of two practice sessions where he reported that the car was not hitting the track despite the team lowering it in the shop, and that the car was a little tight going into the corners. Despite the tight handling condition the #86 was second quickest in practice which has not happened much over the course of the season. The team adjusted for the tight condition and Billy went out for the second practice where he was quite happy with the handling despite a slight loose condition as he entered the corner where again the #86 sat second quickest at the end of practice after running his fastest times of the season.

Group qualifying was up next with Billy slotted in the second to last group which consisted of the fastest cars from the second practice session. When all was said and done Billy ran a 15.257 second lap putting him in the 8<sup>th</sup> position that was just .192 seconds behind the #84 of JR Fitzpatrick who took the pole with a time of 15.065 seconds. It was good to see JR back at the track as during first practice the throttle hung on the #55 that he typically drives during regular nights at the track, sending the #55 over the wall and through the fence in turns 3 & 4. The #22 of APC Series champion Kyle Steckly, the #44 of Steve Laking, the #18 of Cole Quinton and the #97 of Blair Wickett rounding out the top-5.

With triple-50 lap races on tap, it would be imperative to not only pickup good finishes over the course of the first two races, but to keep the car in one piece to have a shot at the Grisdale Triple Crown. With the roll of the dice, the top-6 cars would be inverted with the #03 of Jake Gilbert starting on the pole. Billy would have his work cut out for him on the initial start as he would be starting on the outside lane. As the field took the green flag, Billy was able to get down to the preferred inside lane at the end of lap 1 as he tucked in behind the #27 of Kevin Albers. Billy had to take evasive action on lap 5 as the #27 and the #44 got together coming out of turn 4 resulting in the caution coming out for the #44 who stopped in the middle of turn 1 & 2 with a flat left-rear tire. Billy restarted in the 6<sup>th</sup> position on the outside of the #22p of Chase Pinsonneault and quickly came under fire from the inside lane as the #46 of Lane Zardo followed the #22p underneath the #86 dropping Billy back into 7<sup>th</sup>. The caution came out shortly after for the #18d of David Gallinger spinning down the frontstretch allowing Billy to restart on the inside of the #27. Billy was able to complete the pass on the #46 on the restart moving back up into the 6<sup>th</sup> position. Now on the bumper of the #27, Billy stayed right with him for a number of laps setting up a pass with the #84 on Billy's bumper as well. Billy was finally able to make his move into the top-5 but it was shortlived as the #84 made his move on Billy to drop the #86 back to 6<sup>th</sup>. The third and final caution came out on lap 17 for the #18d once again spinning coming out of turn 4. Dreading having to restart on the outside again, Billy got lucky as race control sent the #84 back behind Billy for the restart as they go back a lap when the caution comes out. The #84 didn't waste any time getting around Billy on the restart dropping him once again back to 6<sup>th</sup>. The remainder of the race went caution free with Billy unable to make the pass on the #18 before the checkered flag fell to finish just outside the top-5 in 6<sup>th</sup>.



After some small adjustments in between races, Billy again lined up on the outside in the 8<sup>th</sup> position for the second 50-lap race. On the initial start the #86 got freightrtrained on the outside as he was unable to get down to the inside lane and dropped all the way back to the 12<sup>th</sup> position before the caution came out on lap 10 for the #22p spinning in the middle of turn 3 & 4. A long green flag spread the field out before the caution came out again for the #84 spinning after contact coming out of turn 4. Now restarting on the inside in 11<sup>th</sup>, the caution came out again on lap 34 for the #03 who got into the wall on the backstretch. Billy found himself again on the outside in 10<sup>th</sup> on the ensuing restart. This race would be all about survival as it was significantly rougher than the first race. The caution came out again a few laps later for the #18 who got into the backstretch wall as well, stopping in turn 4. This time on the restart Billy was able to quickly jump down to the bottom in front of the #27 after the #89c of Shawn Chenoweth had to check up down the backstretch. This is where everything went wrong for the #86 as Billy was in the wrong place at the wrong time coming out of turn 4. Contact between the #89c and the #22p collected the #86 as Billy made hard contact with the left-rear of the #89c causing him to get into the air before slamming back down on the track. The result was a broken right-front shock resulting in a DNF. The team thought about trying to get the #86 back out on track as they were under the impression that starting the third race would allow the team to collect some extra money but the decision was made to park the #86 for the rest of the night. As it turns out, this was for the best as the track was only paying the cars that finished the race so the team would have put a lot of hard work into the getting the car ready for nothing if they would have only gone out and taken the green flag before pulling off. Billy was credited with a 13<sup>th</sup> place finish which was extremely disappointing as the car was capable of much more than the results would show.

The 2023 season has come to a close and we would like to thank all of our sponsors for the continued support including Spira Fire Protection, Hy-Grade Steel Roofing System, Aberfoyle Powersports, BrokerLink Insurance, All Team Sports, BlueTriton – Pure Life Water, Arctic Glacier Premium Ice, Elma Steel, Fleet Image, Dominion Sure Seal, Monarch Graphics & Design Centre, Victaulic Company, National Fire Equipment, Nuco, Vinnie's Mr. Fixit, Wix Filters and Wolseley Canada as we look forward to 2024.