

Billings has Impressive Debut in 358 Modified Division at Can Am

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Running in the 358 Modified Division is tough, with some great competition, and it is a big jump from the underpowered GM Crate Motors that Matt Billings was used to racing over the past three seasons. Combine that with a fact that Matt Billings made his debut at Chapman's Can Am Motorsports Park running his Small Block Modified against the even more powerful Big Blocks, and some of the best drivers in DIRT Modified racing, Matt had a challenge in front of him, but he was certainly up to the task.

The car was fast during the opening hot lap session posting some of the fastest laps times of the evening. After the session was over, the team went to work trying to get just a little more speed out of the car in time for his qualifying heat. Heat race lineups were determined by a draw as each team entered the track, and after all teams had entered, Billings would find himself in the first heat race of three for the Modifieds and in the 6th position. Matt would improve his position after 8 laps of qualifying, finishing in 5th place.

After driving his Billings Automotive, Pastime Motors, Stealth Racewear, Babe Design, Brockville Motors and Turnone high performance steering systems 2009 Bicknell car back to the pit area, Matt and his crew, made up of his father Dean, grandfather Harold, and Doug Herbison went to work on the setup of the car, looking to make a couple more adjustments before his first feature in the new division.

"The crew is a big part of my success", says Matt. "Dad, Grandpa, and Doug Herbison are here tonight, and we also get a lot of help from Roger Shaver and Jamie Pryor. I can't thank them enough for the help they have given me. As you can see, this is a family effort with Dad and Grandpa and we get a lot of support from our entire family as well".

When the green flag flew to start the 25 lap main event, Billings started from the 15th position, but quickly maneuvered his way towards the top 10, and soon found himself entrenched in a dual with future DIRT Motorsports Hall of Fame drivers Danny O'Brien and Steve Paine, with the later competing in a Big Block. When the checkered flag flew, Billing posted a 7th place finish, with all but one of the higher finishing drivers competing with a Big Block.

"It was a good night, says Matt". We ended up 7th, but we were 2nd in our class. Our goal isn't to finish second, but for the first night out we were pretty good. I am looking forward to the rest of the season".

Matt will be back in action this Friday night at Chapman's Can Am Motorsports Park. Brockville Speedway opens for practice the following weekend.

For more information on Matt Billings and the Billings Racing Team, please visit our website, www.mattbillings74.com.



Billings is off to a fast start with strong run at Can Am in his Modified Debut. (Rebecca Eisele Photo)