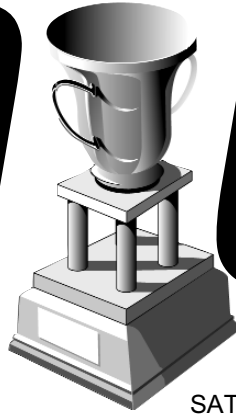


GOLD CUP

DAILY NEWS



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"Reporting the latest news of the fastest four days in the Golden State"

Saldana takes home the gold in Friday prelim

Joey Saldana certainly didn't lead the most laps on Friday night in the second preliminary feature of the 56th Annual Gold Cup Race of Champions at Silver Dollar Speedway in Chico, California, but he led the four most important ones to score the win over Jason Sides, after tracking down the leader late in the race in lapped traffic.

Saldana dove under Sides on the 27th lap to take the spot and held off a furious charge on the last lap to earn his 17th overall win of the 2009 World of Outlaws season. It was his second win of the season at Silver Dollar Speedway and the fifth of his career at the ¼-mile bullring.

"It was a great effort for this team tonight, said Saldana. "Jason (Sides) had a great car and it was just lapped traffic. I actually had the top working there and thought we'd be ok when we got to Jason because that's how I got around Brent (Kaeding). It seemed like everyone running the bottom threw a bunch of loose stuff up there and I couldn't run there anymore. I had to then be patient and wait for lapped traffic. Then he started to move and once he moved that's what won me the race."

Sides jumped out to an early lead from the pole, with the first caution of the night flying on the second lap. He used a strong restart to quickly pull away from Brent Kaeding who was running second. Saldana started fourth in the Budweiser Maxim and took third on the opening circuit from Tommy Tarlton.

Sides encountered lapped traffic for the first time on the fifth lap and began to pull away at this point as Saldana battled Kaeding for the runner-up spot. Saldana would take the position on the 11th lap and set his sights on Sides. Saldana closed on the

leader a couple of times, but Sides was able to clear the lapped cars first and extend his lead in open track. The second caution of the night flew on the 19th lap as Kaeding was all over Saldana for second. At this time, Sides had some engine trouble which would hamper him for the remainder of the 30-lapper.

"I was trying everything I

could," stated Saldana of the three restarts. "I thought the top would be all right, but there was so much crumbly stuff up there that you spun (the tires) on exit (of the corner). I could stay with him through the center, but it just wasn't going to happen. I went back to the bottom and just rode around and tried to hang with him until we got to lapped traffic."

After the race went back green on the 19th lap, the only red flag of the night flew for a four car accident, leading to another restart. Sides opened a couple of car length lead on the ensuing restart and with 10 laps had a sizeable lead in open track. With six laps remaining he found himself in lapped traffic, allowing Saldana to close

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Jac Haudenschild and Jason Meyers have both won their share of races at Silver Dollar Speedway. Tonight they return for the \$50,000 to win Gold Cup Race of Champions -Steve Lamothe photo

Several former winners among tonight's roster

The list of drivers that have won the Gold Cup Race of Champions over the years is a venerable 'Who's Who' of sprint car racing. Since the World of Outlaws began sanctioning the race in 1978, 17 different drivers have added their name to this illustrious list, with the event being held at Silver Dollar Speedway in Chico,

California each year since 1979, with 1978 being the final time the race was held at West Capital Raceway in Sacramento. A total of five drivers currently competing full-time with the World of Outlaws have won the Gold Cup Race of Champions over the last 31 years and their quest to add another win to their resume in the biggest

sprint car race on the West Coast that will wrap up on tonight, culminating with the \$50,000 to win 40-lap finale.



Jac Haudenschild is the defending winner of the Gold Cup Race of Champion, taking the checkered flag in the prestigious event for the third time in his career last season. The 2009 inductee into the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame won the Gold Cup for the first time in 1998 and repeated the following season. His victory last year was his first since the winner's share of the purse was upped to \$50,000. In his career at Silver Dollar Speedway, the native of Wooster,

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