

# 2016 MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge Recap



ERIE, MI (September 23, 2016) – The Engine Pro Sprints on Dirt presented by ARP MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge, formerly the MAHLE/Clevite Short Track Challenge, had a very different look for 2016.

The five-race BLC mini-series typically wrapped up around mid-season and gave SOD competitors an opportunity to compete for a separate point fund within the full SOD season series. As the former name indicates, the challenge took place at five different small tracks. The name was changed to draw attention to the new, exciting Sprints On Dirt unlimited format. It was intended to be the only significant change, but Mother Nature had other ideas.

The first 2016 race at Crystal Motor Speedway was rained out on April 30, then again on May 14. The challenge then moved on to Merritt Speedway and put on a great show that was won by Brian Smith. I-96 Speedway was next on the challenge schedule, but it became the third rain out. On Saturday, July 9, the challenge rolled into Thunderbird Raceway and Brian Smith was victorious again, building up a big lead in BLC points.

With only two races completed by late July, it was apparent that a mid-season finish was not going to happen.

MAHLE/Clevite BLC moved on to Crystal Motor Speedway on July 30, and guess what? The show was rained out. On August 19, in spite of some threatening weather, the I-96 Speedway challenge race was completed with Ohio visitor Mad Max Stambaugh leading the entire feature from his front row starting position.

With only three dates left on the 2016 Engine Pro Sprints on Dirt presented by ARP schedule, and a race already held at Merritt, there was no choice other than including the last two races at Hartford Speedway on September 2 and Crystal Motor Speedway on September 3.

It was a do-or-die weekend, and the Labor Day dates were blessed with great weather. A huge crowd was on hand to see Litchfield, Michigan's Chad Blonde run off with the win in Sean Robinson's 5B.

The September 3 Crystal race was the championship race of the MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge mini-series sponsored by MAHLE/Clevite and final race of the Sprints On Dirt season. It was also the Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP Nitro Black Mike Olrich Memorial Race in support of RacingAwareness.com, the most prestigious event of the entire season. Ryan Ruhl dominated the 30 lap feature to duplicate his win in the 2015 Mike Olrich Memorial.

Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP 2016 Champion Brian Smith used his early season wins to build up a lead that he protected through consistent finishes to also win the MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge Championship.

Tom Schinderle and Dan McCarron looked like series championship contenders as a result of strong finishes in their 305 cubic inch cars, however, neither driver entered later challenge races and dropped out of contention. After a disappointing 8<sup>th</sup> place finish in the first BLC event, Steve Irwin came on strong to finish 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the

remaining races, and closed in to finish only fourteen points behind Smith.

The final standings for the 2016 MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge Championship are:

	<b>Car Number</b>	<b>Driver</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>1</b>	2+	Brian Smith	677	\$ 1,000.00
<b>2</b>	0	Steve Irwin	663	\$ 600.00
<b>3</b>	1A	Mark Aldrich	601	\$ 400.00
<b>4</b>	81	John Gall	539	\$ 300.00
<b>5</b>	10S	Jay Steinebach	509	\$ 200.00
<b>6</b>	1	Eric Smith	496	\$ 150.00
<b>7</b>	8	Justin Ward	494	\$ 100.00

For more information about MAHLE/Clevite, [click here](#). For more information about Engine Pro, [click here](#). For more information about ARP, [click here](#). The full 2016 Sprints on Dirt schedule, rules, current news, and other information are available at [www.sprintsondirt.com](http://www.sprintsondirt.com).

*Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP is brought to you by many important sponsor partners including: Engine Pro (Title Sponsor), ARP (Title Sponsor), Hoosier Racing Tire (Official SOD Tire), MAHLE/Clevite (Beyond Limits Challenge Sponsor), Engine Pro (Lucky Dog Sponsor), Lane Automotive (Primary Heat Race Sponsor), Engler Machine & Tool (Primary Heat Race Sponsor), COMP Cams (Primary Heat Race Sponsor),*

*RockAuto.com (SOD Series Rookie of the Year Sponsor & SOD Sprint Car Rookie of the Year Sponsor), XYZ Machining (Sportsman of the Year Sponsor & Crew Chief of the Year Sponsor), KSE Racing Products (Hard Charger Sponsor). In addition, SOD contingency sponsors include: ATL Racing Fuel Cells, Kistler Racing Products, Allstar Performance, Schoenfeld Headers, K2W Precision/Keizer Aluminum Wheels, Ti22 Performance, BR Motorsports, King Racing Products, License 2 Play, Maxim Racing, Simpson Racing Products, Rod End Supply, Diversified Machine Inc. (DMI), Racing Optics.* For more information about MAHLE/Clevite, [click here](#). For more information about Engine Pro, [click here](#). For more information about ARP, [click here](#).

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## **Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP Trophy Sponsorships Now Available**



Here is your chance to be a part of sprint car history!  
Trophy sponsors for first season of the new, unlimited 2016  
Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP final point

positions 2 through 5 are available at \$ 100.00 each and for positions 6 through 12 at \$80.00 each.

Sponsors will be recognized at the banquet and have their name or company name placed on the trophy. They will be included in awards banquet press releases and will receive a framed certificate of appreciation.

Please contact Sprints On Dirt at [director@sprintsondirt.com](mailto:director@sprintsondirt.com) or 734.309.RACE (7223) by October 14th for more information.

The 2016 SOD Awards Banquet will be at the Holiday Inn Battle Creek in Battle Creek, Michigan on Saturday, November 5th.

Banquet tickets are available for \$35.00 per ticket until the deadline of October 24<sup>th</sup>.

2016 trophy recipients are:

1	2+	Brian Smith
2	0	Steve Irwin
3	1A	Mark Aldrich
4	81	John Gall
5	8	Justin Ward
6	1	Eric Smith
7	19	Brett Mann
8	4T	Josh Turner
9	10S	Jay Steinebach
10	46	Robert Huisken
11	71H/27	Brad Lamberson
12	6	Tyler Beardon

For more information about Engine Pro, go to [www.enginepro.com](http://www.enginepro.com). For more information about ARP, go to [www.arp-bolts.com](http://www.arp-bolts.com). The read all about Sprints on Dirt, including the full 2016 schedule, final 2016 points, rules,

current news, and other information, go to [www.sprintsondirt.com](http://www.sprintsondirt.com).

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## **2016 Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP Awards Banquet Announced**



## Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt 2016 Banquet Information

- Date: *Saturday, November 5, 2016*
- Time: *5:00pm Social Hour  
6:00pm Dinner  
7:00pm Awards Ceremony*
- Location: *Holiday Inn Battle Creek  
12812 Harper Village Dr  
Battle Creek, MI 49034*
- Dinner: *Buffet*
- Tickets: *\$35.00 per person*
- RSVP By: *Monday, October 24, 2016*

*Everyone is welcome. Racers, crew members, fans, friends are all invited. Tickets will not be available at the door. Checks for ticket orders may be made payable to "Sprints On Dirt" and can be mailed to 1852 E. Substation Rd, Erie MI 48133 along with the RSVP sheet below. You may also contact SOD at 734.309.RACE (7223) or [info@sprintsondirt.com](mailto:info@sprintsondirt.com) to arrange for ticket purchases.*

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

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- *Want to stay? Rooms can be reserved by calling Holiday Inn Battle Creek at 269.979.0500 or online at [www.hig.com/holidayinn/battlecreek/battlecreek/battlecreek/](http://www.hig.com/holidayinn/battlecreek/battlecreek/battlecreek/)*

# Ryan Ruhl Rules Engine Pro SOD Nitro Black Mike Olrich Memorial at Crystal



*Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt  
presented by ARP Nitro Black Mike Olrich Memorial Race trophy  
plate (TJ Buffenbarger photo)*





*Ryan Ruhl with the SOD Big Money*



*Ryan Ruhl with Mike's children Joslyn, Taylor, and Josh*

Ryan Ruhl dominated the Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP Nitro Black Mike Olrich Memorial Race in support of Racing Awareness.com at Crystal Motor Speedway. The memorial race was the most prestigious event and final race of the

Sprints On Dirt season, and the championship race of the MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge five-race mini-series.

Ruhl led all 30 laps of the non-stop feature in front of a very large and enthusiastic crowd. Friday's SOD Hartford winner Chad Blonde took over 2<sup>nd</sup> on lap 15, but Ruhl had a full straightaway lead. Blonde was a tick faster than Ruhl the last few laps, but not enough to get close to the leader. Ruhl also won the 2015 Mike Olrich Memorial at Crystal.

Brian Smith drove a steady race to finish 6<sup>th</sup> and secure the 2016 Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP Championship, the MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge, and the 2016 RockAuto.com SOD Series Rookie of the Year.

Ruhl's win was with a 360 cubic inch engine. One 305, three 360's, and and six 410s in the top 10 cars.

Former lightning sprint standout Justin Ward nailed down the 2016 RockAuto.com SOD Sprint Car Rookie of the Year honoring the top first-time driver in a full-size sprint car.



*RockAuto.com Rookies of the Year Brian Smith and Justin Ward*

ARP MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge Feature

	#	Driver	Motor Size	Awards	Contingencies
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1	16	Ryan Ruhl	360		Rod End Supply
2	5B	Chad Blonde	410	KSE Hard Charger	Rod End Supply
3	0	Steve Irwin	410		Rod End Supply
4	19	Brett Mann	410		Racing Optics
5	22M	Dan McCarron	305		ATL Racing Fuel Cells
6	2+	Brian Smith	410		King Racing Products
7	17X	Dain Naida	360		
8	4T	Josh Turner	410		
9	1A	Mark Aldrich	410	Ti22 Draw Winner	
10	46	Robert Huisken	360		
11	10S	Jay Steinebach	410		
12	77X	Alex Hill	360	DMI Draw Winner	
13	3A	Mike Astrauskas	360		
14	27X	Jared Lamberson	360	Engine Pro Lucky Dog	
15	8	Justin Ward	410		
16	81	John Gall	410		
17	24	Eric Smith	360		
18	6	Tyler Bearden	305		
19	27	Brad Lamberson	360		

20	89	Chris Pobanz	360		
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Fast Qualifier – Chad Blonde, 12.390

Engler Machine & Tool Heat \$100 winner – Josh Turner (4T)  
4T, 19, 16, 22M, 10S, 6, 91L

Lane Automotive Heat \$100 winner – Dain Naida (17X)  
17X, 2+, 27, 27X, 3A, 8, 89, 35

COMP Cams Heat \$100 winner – Mark Aldrich (1A)  
1A, 0, 5B, 46, 81, 77X, 24, 31

B-Main winner – Chris Pobanz (89)  
89, 8, 6, 24, 35 (Mark Strpko), 91L (Lexi Adgate), 31 (Tanner Astrauskas), DNS – 57 (Tyler Fitzpatrick)

Kistler Racing Products Contingencies – Brett Mann, Steve Irwin

BR Motorsports Contingency – Ryan Ruhl

COMP Cams Contingency – Brian Smith

Allstar Performance Contingency – Brad Lamberson

Schoenfeld Headers – Chad Blonde

For general information about Racing Awareness, go [here](#); on Facebook, search for RacingAwareness or @RacingAwareness; on Twitter and Instagram type @RacingAwareness. For specific inquiries about Racing Awareness, contact Jeff or Norm at [talktous@racingawareness.com](mailto:talktous@racingawareness.com).

For more information about MAHLE/Clevite, go [here](#). For more information about Engine Pro and Nitro Black, go to [here](#). For more information about ARP, go [here](#). The full 2016 Sprints on Dirt schedule, rules, current news, and other information are available [here](#).

*Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP is brought to you by many important sponsor partners including: Engine Pro (Title Sponsor), ARP (Title Sponsor), Hoosier Racing Tire*

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**Chad Blonde Battles to  
Hartford Engine Pro SOD by  
ARP MAHLE/Clevite Beyond  
Limits Challenge Win**



ERIE, MI (September 5, 2016) – Veteran Michigan sprint car star Chad Blonde drove his Sean Robinson owned 5B to victory from his 8<sup>th</sup> place starting position over 10<sup>th</sup> place starter Ryan Ruhl and 9<sup>th</sup> place starter Steve Irwin to win the Engine Pro Sprints On Dirt presented by ARP MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge feature at Hartford Speedway last night. The huge crowd saw a wild show with great racing on the 2016 Sprint On Dirt spec tire from Hoosier Racing Tire.

Linden Jones and John Gall led the start of the 20-lap feature with Gall jumping into the lead for the first 2 laps before Jones took over for laps 3-4. On lap 4, SOD points leader Brian Smith escaped disaster when Joe Swanson climbed up his left rear going into turn one bringing out the race's only caution. Both cars sustained damage, but restarted after repairs in the pits. Early leaders John Gall, Linden Jones, and Mark Aldrich, as well as SOD Hartford May winner Ryan Ruhl proved to be no match for Blonde who drove away and finished with a commanding lead over Ryan Ruhl and Steve Irwin. Blonde's victory was his first appearance with SOD in several years, and he found the highly-acclaimed 2016 SOD spec Hoosier tires to his liking.

Robert Bulloch suffered a mechanical failure in his Kirkendall 7K that sent him hard into the water barrels in turn four in the first heat. His car was launched high into the air upon impact and although the car was destroyed, Bulloch was eventually cleared by the track medical crew. The proper installation of the car's seat and belts prevented potentially serious injuries in this high-speed, heavy-impact crash.

#### ARP MAHLE/Clevite Beyond Limits Challenge Feature

	#	Driver	Awards	Contingencies
1	5B	Chad Blonde		Rod End Supply
2	16	Ryan Ruhl	KSE Hard Charger	Rod End Supply
3	0	Steve Irwin		Rod End Supply
4	1A	Mark Aldrich		Racing Optics
5	7	Joe Swanson		ATL Racing Fuel Cells
6	19J	Linden Jones		King Racing Products

7	10S	Jay Steinebach	Ti22 Draw Winner	
8	4T	Josh Turner		
9	2+	Brian Smith		
10	46	Robert Huisken		
11	81	John Gall	DMI Draw Winner	
12	27K	Ryan Kirkendall	Engine Pro Lucky Dog	
13	1	Eric Smith		
14	8	Justin Ward		
15	57	Tyler Fitzpatrick		
16	91L	Lexi Adgate		
DNS	7K	Robert Bulloch		
DNS	23	Joe Geibe		

COMP Cams \$100 Fast Qualifier

Joe Swanson (7) – 16.803

Engler Machine & Tool Heat \$100 winner – Brian Smith (2+)

2+, 7, 0, 1A, 19J, 46, 91L, 23

Lane Automotive Heat \$100 winner – Ryan Tuhl (16)

16, 5B, 4T, 27K, 81, 7K, 8, 24, 57

Kistler Racing Products Contingency – Joe Swanson

BR Motorsports Contingency – Steve Irwin

COMP Cams Contingency – Chad Blonde

Allstar Performance Contingency – Josh Turner

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