

MYLAPS

INDY ELITE SERIES

Indy Elite Series

Round Four

WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca

Trackside Report

September 15, 2019

35 drivers are on the entry list for tonight's event, meaning two entries will fail to qualify and start the points-paying race.

Ray Kingsbury is the points leader after three rounds of the Indy Elite Series, leading Brendan Lichtenberg by 11 points following the most recent race at Texas Motor Speedway.

Qualifying

Joshua Chin takes the pole for tonight's 45-lap race with a best lap of 1m5.854s, ahead of Adam Blocker (1m5.944s) and Henry Bennett (1m6.093s). After a penalty from the previous race in Texas, Chin will have to drop from the pole to the end of the field.

John Downing had an accident in qualifications while Jeff Drake, Tim Doyle, and Chad Simpson had off-track excursions. In the end, Downing and Logan Simmons failed to post times and were eliminated from the 33-car starting grid.

Brandon Traino, who qualified seventh, was also given an end-of-line penalty as a result of a previous race penalty.

Race

LAP 1: GREEN: With Chin dropping to the rear of the field, Henry Bennett and Adam Blocker lead the field to green. Bennett jumps out to the lead as Flinn Lazier jumps to second place in a three-wide duel. Michael Peters started from the pits.

LAP 2: Adam Dock and Niall McBride have a run-in at the corkscrew.

LAP 3: Jeff Drake spins entering Turn 1 and Andrew Wood jumps over the nose of Drake. No caution but both drivers pit to repair damage.

LAP 4: Campbell spins into the sand fighting Blocker for P3 and Andrew Kinsella also comes sliding into the same sand run-off.

LAP 5: Bennett leads Lazier by 1.017s and Blocker by 2.187s.

LAP 6: Kinsella spins from 11th in the Corkscrew corner and loses 12 positions.

LAP 7: Riley Thompson spins in the Corkscrew corner and remains in 10th place.

LAP 8: Bennett laps the former pole sitter Chin. Bennett leads by 1.565s over Lazier and Blocker by 2.074s.

LAP 10: Campbell overtakes Demeritt for seventh place. Peters has a slight off-track. Jeff Drake exits the race and will finish 33rd.

LAP 12: Bradley Walters spins entering final corner and Chin runs into the car stopped broadside across the track. No caution.

LAP 13: Bennett leads Lazier by 1.659s and Blocker by 3.548s

LAP 14: Campbell overtakes Frank Levick IV for sixth place.

LAP 15: Richard Holt spins around twice but does not collect any other cars or bring out a caution. Holt immediately pits afterward.

LAP 16: Bennett leads Lazier by 0.784s and Blocker by 3.124s. Campbell overtakes Simon Briant for fourth place. David Adams spins at the exit of Turn 4, running 14th.

LAP 17: 21 cars remain on the lead lap at this time. The only car out of the race is Drake.

LAP 18: Bennett and Lazier dealing with lapped traffic as these cars come out of pit lane. Bennett leads Lazier by 0.670s and Blocker by 3.247s. Lazier eventually pits from second place.

Peters spins in front of Campbell and Campbell immediately pits for a front wing change and drops to seventh place.

LAP 20: Bennett and Blocker pit from first and second. Lazier barely overtakes Bennett on the pit-out. Entering the Corkscrew corner with the lead, Lazier locks up the brakes and has an off-track that gives Bennett the lead back.

LAP 21: Dan Lee Ensich exits the race and will finish 31st.

LAP 22: Bennett leads Lazier by 0.340s and Blocker by 1.810s. Bennett and Lazier engaged in a fierce duel into Lap 23 and the first few corners.

LAP 23: With Bennett and Lazier battling, Blocker has closed to within a second of the lead. Bennett holds off Lazier. Campbell spins and drops from fourth to eleventh.

LAP 24: Lazier dives into Turns 1 and 2 and overtakes Bennett for the race lead. Joe Flanagan exits the race and will finish 30th.

LAP 25: Lazier leads Bennett by 0.644s and Blocker by 0.846s. Eik is fourth, 8.698s back. Michael Peters exits the race and will finish 32nd.

LAP 26: Adam Plunkett does a half-spin exiting the final corner and drops to 16th.

LAP 27: Lazier leads Bennett by 1.022s and Blocker by 1.432s. 21 drivers are on the lead lap and 29 drivers are still in the race. David Adams and Adam Dock both have spins – Dock on the final corner and Adams leaves the track at Turn 5. Dock then exits the race and will finish 29th.

Matt Kingsbury spins at the final corner and hits his nose on the inside pit wall. Kingsbury would go off again on Lap 28 with no front wing/downforce.

LAP 29: McBride loses his car on corner entry and does a full spin without hitting any cars or walls.

LAP 30: Traino spins on cold tires after pitting.

LAP 31: Lazier leads Bennett by 1.847s and Blocker by 2.444s. Kingsbury exits the race and will finish 28th.

LAP 32: McBride spins in the Corkscrew corner and drops to 26th place after pulling off of the race track.

LAP 33: Blocker overtakes Bennett for second place. Lazier leads Blocker by 2.332s.

LAP 34: Chin does a sliding spin and keeps the car moving.

LAP 35: Lazier leads Blocker by 1.957s. Bennett to pit lane.

LAP 36: Lazier leads Blocker by 1.409s. Lazier eventually pits and Blocker assumes the lead. Riley Thompson spins into the dirt trap at Turn 6.

LAP 38: Blocker has not pitted and leads Campbell by 24.467s, Lazier by 26.981s and Demeritt by 32.522s as pit sequences cycle through. Bennett is fifth, 33.865s back.

LAP 39: Blocker pits from the lead and holds the lead coming off of pit lane ahead of Campbell, Lazier and Bennett.

LAP 40: Andrew Wood spins at the Corkscrew corner right in front of Blocker and Campbell but no drivers make contact. Campbell pits from second place.

LAP 41: Blocker leads Lazier by 3.530s and Bennett by 10.536s. Exiting pit lane, Campbell's car stops on the pit exit road and returns to the pit lane from fourth place.

LAP 42: Blocker leads Lazier by 4.153s and Bennett by 11.208s.

LAP 43: Blocker leads Lazier by 4.016s and Bennett by 10.824s. Eik is fourth, 23.405s back and Briant is fifth, 23.944s back of the leader.

LAP 44: Blocker leads Lazier by 3.826s and Bennett by 10.744s. Frank Levick IV has come from 13th starting position to 6th with two laps left.

LAP 45: WHITE FLAG: Blocker leads Lazier by 4.916s over Bennett (10.484s behind).

CHECKERED FLAG: Adam Blocker wins the MYLAPS Indy Elite Series Grand Prix of Monterey over Flinn Lazier, Henry Bennett, Andreas Eik and Simon Briant.

This is the second career victory for Blocker in the MYLAPS Indy Elite Series – previously won in January 2019 at New Hampshire. Tonight's result is the best finish for Lazier in seven career IES starts – his previous best result was a fifth-place run in March 2019 at Circuit of the Americas.

Chris Stofer (finished 13th) made up nine spots from his 22nd place starting position – the most of any driver on the night.

After dropping from the race exiting pit lane on Lap 41, Campbell would finish 24th despite a valiant effort to crack the top five.

Henry Bennett leads the 2019 MYLAPS Indy Elite Series fall championship by 15 points over Ray Kingsbury following tonight's fourth round of the season.

Adam Blocker, Winner: "Definitely took a lot of patience tonight – I was the third or fourth fastest car, I thought. Qualified second, put in a really good Q time. Josh (Chin) got an EOL which meant Henry (started from the pole)... and I got passed by Flinn on the first lap. I think I had comparable pace to Henry and Flinn, but it is just really hard to follow in dirty air. I think Zach (Campbell) and Chin had better pace than me, but Zach made a mistake and fell back and Chin had to start from the back, so they were really non-factors. It was really just keeping touch with Henry and Flinn.

“In the first stint, they pulled away from me a lot and the only reason I was keeping up was traffic. Henry and Flinn started fighting hard in the second stint so I caught up to them, and one time onto the backstraight, Henry got a really bad run following lapped traffic and I passed him on the outside in the Corkscrew – so that was interesting. Definitely a lot of respect from him to make that work. Then just made the strategy call at the end – I knew the tires could last, so took no tires and brought it home and won.”

Henry Bennett, Third Place: “It was going reasonably well, but I was never really happy with my pace all race – I was well down from my practice pace. When I had a clean track, I seemed to be able to pull away a little bit from Flinn and Adam. On the pit stops I tried to go one lap extra – I tried to stretch it – but I ran out of fuel going into my pit box. I think that made the difference, letting Flinn by after the first stops. But then Flinn made his mistake... I was on my out lap and I got by him again. But the lapped traffic was really, really difficult to manage, lets say, and that kept the gap real close between me, Flinn and Adam. I had quite a nice battle – I don’t know how many corners we were side by side for, me and Flinn – but it was quite good. But unfortunately, I just had to lift when I got squeezed in Turn 2 and let him by.”

Brandon Traino, Seventh Place: “It feels like a victory (to finish seventh after starting from the back). It was frustrating to start all the way back there on a road course – it is so hard to pass. Luckily the strategy we came up with helped me get into clean air and undercut a bunch of people (on pit strategy).”

OFFICIAL MYLAPS INDY ELITE SERIES POINT STANDINGS (Top 10)

1. Henry Bennett, 165
2. Ray Kingsbury, 150
3. Brendan Lichtenberg, 146
4. Adam Blocker, 140
5. Brandon Traino, 115
6. Adam Plunkett, 113
7. Andreas Eik, 106
8. David Adams, 98
9. Christopher Demeritt, 96
10. Michele Costatini 93
 Andrew Kinsella, 93

The next MYLAPS Indy Elite Series race will be held on Sunday, September 29 as the championship heads to ISM Raceway in Phoenix, Arizona for the fifth round of the 2019 fall season. The race will be shown live by SYMTV.