

Beat: Sports

Kansas City Bleeds Alcohol!

The Rich Racing Heritage of Kansas City

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USPA NEWS - To some, stepping out into the crisp spring air sends a shot of adrenaline felt deeply just below the sternum accompanied by the thought of the beckoning, sweet, stinging scent of alcohol as it dances upon a vortex created by a field of fire-breathing, alcohol fueled beasts of man's creation!

Why are they called "Sprint Cars"? Perhaps because they are quite literally the fastest land machine known to man with a power to weight ratio of 1,400 lbs and a power plant producing 140-340 more horsepower than a Formula One engine such as those raced in the prestigious Indianapolis 500. Kansas City's race heritage runs as deeply as it's time-honored jazz and Bar-B-Q tradition! In 1922 the Kansas City Speedway was built at what is now 95th and Troost. No evidence of the track exists today but to those who know the history and tradition, the ghosts of drivers and pit crews passed still linger.

The inaugural race on September 17, 1922 was promoted as "The greatest display of skill, nerve and daring in the history of modern sport!". The surface of the track was constructed of what was estimated at approximately 1 million linear feet of lumber 2x4's to form a 1-¼ mile oval track with corner banking of almost 45 degrees. Other historically significant tracks in the Kansas City area include dirt tracks Olympic Stadium, Riverside Speedway and Lakeside Speedway. Lakeside is still in existence and operational today. Dirt track racing, which is primarily the surface of choice for Sprint Cars has evolved through the decades and is now growing into more of a family event.

Local business owner or entrepreneur? Auto racing possesses the highest rate of brand loyalty among fans. According to a SponsorLink Research report, racing fans demonstrate the highest loyalty among all sports fan categories in the U.S. The report states that 7 out of 10 race fans say they are loyal to a sponsor's brand when the brand supports their sport, which happens to be at a 20% higher rate than any other sport in North America. Over the last 3 years NASCAR has increased its average annual TV revenue by +46%, which speaks to the ever-appealing lure of the live, in the moment, spontaneous and unpredictable nature of auto racing.

Valley Speedway in Grain Valley, Missouri holds what is essentially an "intermission" where young race fans in the stands get to come down to the flagman's stand to board the track school bus which embarks on a few fun-filled laps around the track (at a responsible pace of course)! The best way to experience the sport is at the track with family, friends, food from concessions and a beverage of your choice so get out to the track this year at Grain Valley, Lakeside, Kansas Speedway or even "The Diamond in the Dirt" Lucas Oil Speedway in Wheatland, Mo. which some consider the finest dirt track in the country! Hope to see you there race fans!

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