

Michael LaBelle / Weirbach Racing's INDY Race Report



After yet another disappointing finish in Peoria, Illinois last Sunday, I arrived in Indianapolis, Indiana for the next round of the AMA Pro singles series with a positive attitude. From the time I arrived at the track to the time I left the track, the Weirbach Racing team was saying nothing but positive things about the Indy Mile. We all knew that worrying about the little things was not going to help us get to the front and I knew that it would take a professional attitude to stay at the front, where I feel I belong. The past couple of weeks have tested the patience of the whole team but with a new outlook on Professional flat track, I felt I was ready to test the INDY MILE. The Indy Mile was exactly as I remembered from my visit to it last year, the track with long straights, and relatively tight corners for a Mile. The track was loose clay when we arrived in the morning but I knew that over the course of the day it would brush off on the bottom, giving us that sweet looking groove.

I came off the track after my first session with a smile from ear to ear because I find nothing better in life than riding a Canadian Style cushion at 100 MPH +! However, we made some changes to the bike anyway because the team knew that the track would brush off and get a tiny bit slower. After the last two timed session, I found myself 4th fastest on the Indy mile out of 50 riders. First time mile rider but long time friend, Jesse Phibbs #93T posted fastest time of the day, which meant there would be two Canadians on the front row of the heat races!

For the first time since Daytona Beach, Florida, my team-mate and I were finally in different heat races. Who was in our heats did not matter to us but we thought it would be cool to have both Weirbach Racing 450 Hondas on the heat races at the Indy mile.

I lined up in the first heat and after the longest start light of Pro singles history (Joking) we took off to the first corner. I found myself in 4th but slipped into 3rd coming out of turn 2, just before the emergency lights came on and the race was stopped. After a short break while the AMA and Ambulance crews attended to the fallen riders, we were pinned and hitting the first corner again. This time I was in 3rd off the corner and quickly slipped into 2nd. I traded spots with the 3rd and 4th place riders for 4 laps before my tire went flat going into 1. Luckily for me I was able to ride it out for the last two laps and still have a 5th place and transfers spot. Turns out someone ran into the side of me on the track, breaking my pipe. Also, my tire was flat, and there was so much clay in the radiators that my bike was overheating.

The team quickly went to work and got me ready for the Indy Mile main event. It seems like the more excited you are for a race, the longer the starting light is, because this one took forever. I hit the first corner in 8th place where I found myself directly behind the AMA pro singles #1 plate holder, Brad Baker. I figured the best way to get to the front was to follow the #1. By the half way flags, we had managed to catch the lead pack so I figured I could now go to work and get to the front, but that was a lot easier said than done because for the rest of the race I found myself in a battle with Brad and ended up finishing 7th, directly behind him and James Rispoli. Considering the past couple of finishes I have had, I think a 7th place finish is a good day.

My team was also able to take a bad situation and turn it into an awesome day. I will use this 7th place finish as fuel for the fire coming into the Springfield, Illinois weekend which is quickly approaching. I can run at the front, I'm able to run at the front, and most importantly, I want to run at the front, so watch out for 20T in Springfield!

Until next time!

Michael LaBelle - #20T

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