

Fletcher staying even-keeled about early series points lead

OSCAAR veteran knows only too well that it's never over till it's over

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

John Fletcher isn't about to get too excited about his early-season points lead.

After all, the seasoned OSCAAR Outlaw Super Late Model driver has held top spot in the standings on several occasions over the past two years — only to wind up a heartbreakingly-close second to Rob Clarke of London when the dust had settled.

So while strengthening his hold on first with a feature win at Sunset Speedway Saturday night brought him a step closer to finally claiming overall victory this season, the local racer recognizes there's still plenty of racing left this summer.

And he knows more than anyone just how narrow the margin of error is when it comes to chasing down a series championship.

"It's never over till it's over. It'll come down to the last night like it always does," said the 38-year-old Miltonian, who lost the series title to Clarke by virtue of a blown transmission and season-ending flat tire the last two years.

"If we do our jobs well night in and night out we should be all right, but one bad night can kill you and be really tough to recover from."

Fortunately he hasn't had one of those yet this year, with a second-place finish at Mosport Speedway June 24 sandwiched by victories in his only other two races so far.

Feeling changes were in order after a disappointing sixth-place showing in his sec-

ond heat race Saturday, Fletcher and his JNE Consulting #61 pit crew — headed up by brother Scott — made wholesale adjustments before the evening's main event.

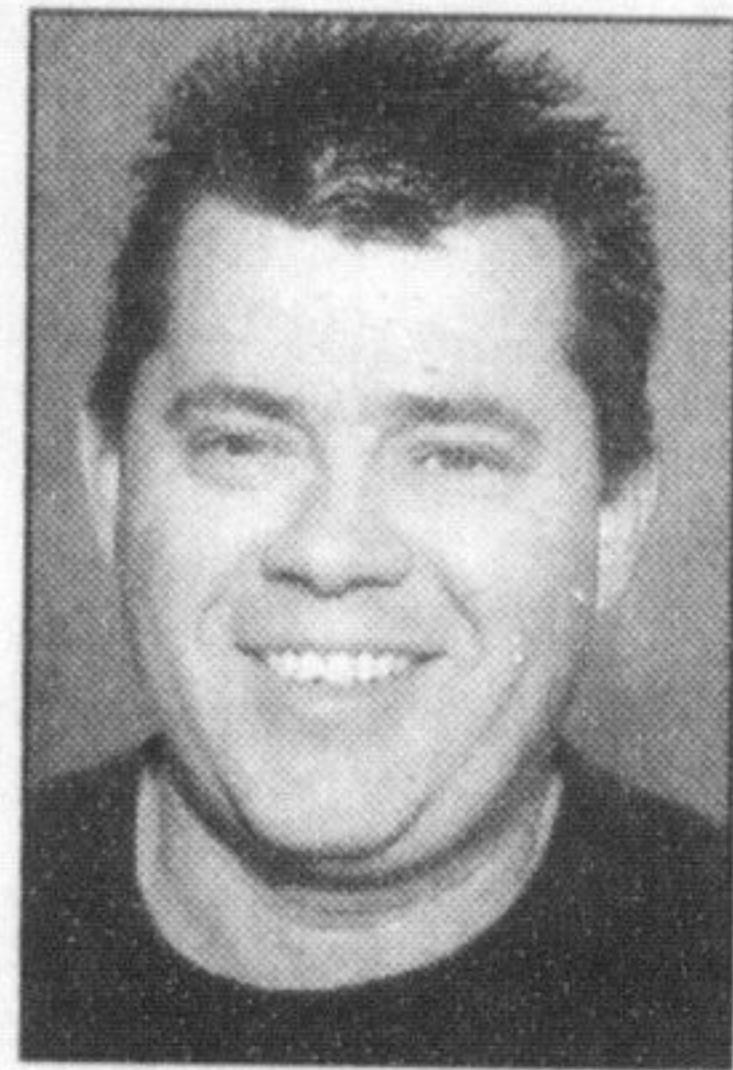
"I don't really like to make changes like that at the track, but we needed more manoeuvrability and the car definitely drove better after that."

Starting the feature in third place, Fletcher quickly moved up to second and overtook leader Shane Maginnis of Waterdown on lap 35.

"It was a good pass. He (Maginnis) was having some trouble on the corners and basically he wiggled and I just got by him."

The Milton driver would maintain top spot the rest of the way and take the checkered flag by a rather sizable margin to bolster his overall points lead on Clarke — who didn't do himself any favours with a disappointing seventh-place finish.

Fletcher and company are back at it tomorrow night at Mosport.



John Fletcher

Marauders win by default

The Marauders tasted victory against Oshawa Monday night — but not in traditional fashion.

With the Hawkeyes unable to use Civic Stadium for a second time in as many scheduled encounters with

Milton, a forfeit win was awarded.

Now 4-1 and tied for second place in the NFC's South Division, the Marauders host the neighbouring Oakville Longhorns tomorrow at 3 p.m. at Milton District High School.

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