

(Kaukauna, WI) – Jim Duchow readily admits that 2018 is a pivotal year for the WIR ¼ Mile Late Models at Wisconsin International Raceway in Kaukauna.

Two years ago the former WIR ¼ mile sportsman champion teamed up with former racer Dave Schneider from Right Foot Performance, Joe Nechodom from RaceTech chassis and friend and fellow former ¼ mile sportsman champion Pete Berken to form what was then called the “Outlaw late models” in an attempt bring the full sized late models back on to the ¼ mile track. “The whole concept at the time was to dig some of these older chassis’ out of the shops and barns and get them back on the track while keeping racing affordable,” Duchow explained. “You can field a car ready to go in this class for under \$10,000. It focuses on very affordable motor rules and an economy shock and spring program. There are plenty laying around and guys like Pete (Berken) and even the Anthony’s have cars you can either rent for a night. Some simply need a motor and a little TLC and they’re ready to go racing.”

The car Duchow ran on occasion in the division last year had a near 30 year old chassis underneath it with some updates. “I know the car Pete drives has got to be 20 years old too,” Duchow explained. “One of the cars Pete has will be sort of a “track mule” with guest drivers in it periodically throughout the season.”

“What these WIR ¼ mile late models do is provide another resource for super late model and late model teams to sell their cars,” said Scott Vandenhuevel, one of the owners of Jeff Van Oudenhoven’s super late model ride. For 2018 rules have been tweaked to allow cars featuring the GM 602 crate motor to compete. In addition the class will partake in qualifying, heat races and a feature event. “The heats will be split into two heats if we can get 10 or more cars,” Duchow said.

According to Duchow, several drivers have pledged that they’ll have their race cars out at some point during the 2018 season. Among them are Duchow, Berken, Travis Willing, Tom Spierowski, Cory Kemkes, Chad Devine, Jake Fuller, Steve Smits Jerry Schneider, Mike Reichenberger, Jimmy Wilson and Steve Giese.

The division has seven races scheduled on the Fox River Racing Club's "Thursday Night Thunder" program. In addition to the Red, White and Blue dates June 7, July 12 and August 9, the class will also compete on the season opening night May 24, along with June 28, August 2 and August 23.

Among the sponsors supporting the division in 2018 are Pete's Auto, Right Foot Performance, Hank & Karen's Pub & Grill, Pathfinder Chassis, Lefthander Chassis, RaceTech chassis, Coleman Racing Products and Bassett Wheel.

Tuesday night oval practices are slated to begin on May 1 with Saturday, May 5 serving as the annual FRRRC practice and inspection day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Spectator admission is free that day. On Thursday race nights the first green flag flies at 6:45 p.m.

For more information on the WIR ¼ mile late models you can call Duchow at (920) 323 2229 or Berken at 920 915 7630.