

7-27-26: Lenawee County Fairgrounds
Track #288 | Adrian, MI | Dirt Figure-8

USAC made the decision to postpone today's Circle City race until tomorrow so I had to try to figure out a plan for the day. According to the Trackchaser census there were only two other tracks in the country that were racing tonight and both of them happened to be 3.5 hours away in Michigan, both fair figure-8 races. I chose the one that didn't have thunderstorm warnings in the forecast and headed off to check it out.

The Lenawee County Fair claims to be the oldest fair in Michigan, dating back to 1839. I got \$5 parking nearby and bought my admission ticket to the fair, then to the grandstands themselves. They seemed to still be setting up the fair as the carnival rides were being actively assembled, which was actually pretty interesting to watch.



The grandstands were decently full and fully covered, with only a single set of poles at the front.



The track was a decent distance away from the stands since it was set behind the permanent stage area. It was a single figure-8, demarcated by a large number of tractor tires on the inside and outside and quite long and narrow, with tight radius turns.



They started with a “beauty pageant” for the best appearing car, of the 18 lined up along the frontstretch. Luckily this didn’t take too long (I have a real issue with show-n-shine style contest stemming from the absurdly long one that used to happen at the yearly Pocatello, ID monster truck show I attended yearly, but that’s a separate issue).

I was surprised by the safety measures employed, or more specifically the lack thereof. The entire backstretch containing a number of fans had no hard barriers separating it from the track, at most a single tractor tire and a chainlink fence. The firefighters along the course were just standing outside the tire barrier, with one straight up leaning on the tire as cars drove right by on the other side. The starter and flaggers also felt like they were way too close to the track and I was a bit nervous watching the racing with everyone unprotected like that.



They had real solid car counts, with 37 cars and 18 pickups, split into 5 and 3 heats respectively, each from a standing start. The track started super rutted, seemingly not prepped basically at all. It started getting packed in somewhat through the heats, and as soon as it started to have some speed they brought out the water truck and dumped a ton of water into it. The heat following that could barely take off the line due to a lack of traction. That pattern continued - by the time they were able to hold a good bit of speed they dumped more water in and then the next couple heats were slow and relatively boring.

The crowd was really into it the whole time though. They were standing up and cheering and making a ton of noise the whole time; I appreciated the energy even if I couldn't quite figure out exactly who they were cheering for.

There was one car upside down in the heats, which brought about the biggest cheer of the night. Two cars were side by side into the turn, the outer one got sideways and the inner one didn't let off, flipping the outer one on his roof.

I ultimately stayed for the car and truck heats then grabbed a solid dinner of a ribeye sandwich and a \$3 strawberry milkshake before departing since it was another 3.5 hours back. The racing was better than I maybe thought it was going to be, nothing I'd have normally gone this far out

of my way for but it was very good to be able to count a new track on the unexpected Sprint Week off day and in a new state at that, my 41st.