

## Josh Weller A 360 Sprint Car Racer On The Way Up The Ladder



**BRANDDALE, PA** - Josh Weller is an up-and-coming United Racing Company (URC) chauffeur with a clear-cut shot at finishing the 2007 racing season as a member of the top-10 in points. In addition, Weller is a prospering pilot when it comes to running numerous events up and down the East Coast, following the popular 360 Sprint Car traveling series. Josh Weller is a young man on the way up, without a doubt.

In 2005, Weller finished up the campaign as the 15th-place racer in the URC season-long points race, wheeling the clean-looking, family-owned Kutztown Glass and Mirror No. 63 machine. In 2006, Josh dropped slightly to 18th-place in the season-long URC points battle. Weller's fall in the points chase was not due to any lack of effort on Josh's part, by any means.

He simply expanded his horizons.

"In 2006, we traveled more and missed several point races on the URC schedule so we didn't do as well as the season before," revealed the 21-year-old Weller. "We raced some 360 Sprint Car series events in the Carolinas and we also traveled a time or two down south to Georgia, plus we went to Charlotte, as well. This year we might visit Susquehanna a handful of times to run the (ASCS) 360 races there, but we also have a real interest in running more of the national 360 Sprint Car events. We'll also run with the URC as much as we can. We just like traveling and seeing some different competition and racing against a tougher crowd, if you will. The URC has a very tough field, don't get me wrong, we just like trying some things, different things.

"The biggest thing we need, though, is to find a larger sponsor who isn't really interested in just local racing. Most of the local business people aren't really interested in our team, since we race two, three or four hours away from home, most races we run. We've had great support in recent years from Har-Jan Mechanical, Assured Automation, Hunter Keystone Peterbilt and Carl Weller Insurance, as sponsors for our team, but we need bigger sponsors to do bigger things. You can honestly say that we are stretched to the limit, presently.

"We got a win in 2006 and that part is now out of the way. I won the Rookie of The Year honor in 2003 with the URC and, now, it is our fifth-year running with the URC. We think we've moved up a level or two since we started running in the URC ranks. I feel settled in now and we feel we can be a contender for wins any night. I think we've got a team on the way up," suggested Weller, who works as an auto glass installer during the week.

In 2007, Josh Weller and his family-financed racing team are a solid combination and the team

out of Mertztown, Pa., has to be considered a serious contender each night they race. The team now has the needed equipment, Josh has the experience and things are, finally, starting to come together. Weller is gaining strength, if you will, to be a stronger pilot, this year, as well.

"We plan to have three cars available by the summer," offered Josh. "Two cars will be basically identical and the third chassis is on order. That third car will have a little longer wheelbase because we want to try a little something that's different. All three are the same chassis maker. We now are also in our third season running with a Don Ott built motor and it is the most reliable engine we have ever had. We haven't had an engine issue in about two years because Don just does a fantastic job. They are very strong engines, too.

"I like racing on the smaller tracks because you can make your own destiny out there. You can make moves and mess other people up, easier. Lapped traffic is a help, but on bigger tracks it is not as much fun because you get so spread out, so often. It is just more fun racing the smaller tracks with a sprint car, for me.

"This winter, for the first time ever, I am going to the gym and trying to build myself up so I can be stronger on the night we race. I usually do well in a heat race and I am strong through the first half of the main. I have noticed that I'm getting tired and worn in the second-half of the feature. Hopefully, this will see us finishing better because I will be stronger at the end of the races. It's a new thing I decided to try and, I think, it'll help us. We'll see," commented Weller.

Josh Weller is willing to do whatever it takes to move up that ladder in Sprint Car racing. Josh started with the quarter-midgets and won some 86 features in a 5-year career. From there, Weller advanced to the 250cc Micro-Sprints in 1999, winning once. In 2000, Josh added another 12 victories and moved up to a 600cc Micro-Sprint in 2001, winning seven more feature races. By 2003, Weller was racing as a URC first-year driver and, now, Josh is anxious to take that next step up in his career.

"I'd love to get a ride with a 360 Sprint Car team or give a 410 Sprint Car a shot, some season," mentioned Josh. "I feel very comfortable and very settled in, now. I'd accept any offer to run a full season in a ride with a team that runs the URC schedule. Whatever might become available? We've developed a good notebook to set up our cars and we've got a good idea what to do to be fast and run out in front. I feel we have a very competitive team, every time we go out and race.

"If we do not find bigger sponsorships to help us grow, you can honestly say, I am stuck right where I am. That's not a bad thing. We can do well running as we are, but you always want an opportunity to grow or move up or try that next step up and that next level. My family team has carried me about as far as we could stretch things, but I am not complaining, by any means.

"The URC has a bunch of youthful drivers and talented young drivers, plus there are veterans there who have been around a long, long time and they are still so competitive. It makes it a tough field. It is a good mix of talented drivers in the



**JOSH WELLER (63) has big plans in 360 Sprint Car racing this season. Brook Weibley will drive the Johnny Pinter #92 this season on the URC circuit. Read more in this week's Randy Kane column. (Photo by Bill Hess)**

URC and I enjoy racing with them. Traveling, though, running with the names that are always in the national 360 Sprint Car headlines, that's an experience that just makes you better as a driver. You learn a lot running out on the road as we've been doing.

"I just know we'll be running often in 2006 and we'll have a 360 Sprint Car in the trailer and we'll be racing somewhere. There is nothing written in stone, as far as our schedule goes. We'll run everywhere we can and do our best each time we go out there. I believe we are a team on the way up," announced 'The Wild Child,' as Josh is known in the local Sprint Car racing circles, these days.

### FINISHING LINES

\* **Brook Weibley** finished up with a strong fourth-place effort in 2006, aboard the Bill Turpin and Fred Kennedy owned Mini Crete Concrete Team 56 ride, as a first-year pilot in the United Racing Company season-long points battle. That solid effort, Weibley, 46, suggested in a recent chat, was the result of some very consistent efforts, but several flat tires and a few dropouts, along the way, caused Weibley to enjoy a good year and not a great one. Still, overall, the seasoned throttle-jockey out of York Springs, Pa., wasn't one to complain.

After splitting with the Team 56 ride at the end of 2006, Weibley has made a move to the John and Karen Pinter owned The Audi Shop No. 92 mount, for 2007. Brook feels it's a great combination and is expecting bigger things, after he now has gotten acclimated to 360 sprint car racing, following some successful years wheeling his own familiar No. 32 weekly 410 Sprint Car mount in central Pennsylvania.

"Racing out on the road and all the travel we did with the URC took some time to get used to, after running weekly races close to home for so many years in central Pennsylvania," offered Weibley, who's a self-employed mechanic once that helmet comes off. "That team I raced with as my ride with a 410 Sprint has since been dissolved, so I am strictly a 360 Sprint racer, now.

"We are going to run a Maxim chassis with the number 92 team and, really, the way we set up this URC car and that 410 sprint car are, pretty much, the same basic ideas. We all go with the same basic ideas. I use the experience of the car owner and my crew, plus add in my own thoughts, and we, usually, hit on a pretty decent set up. It all comes down to what a driver likes to try or what he dislikes, in the end.

"I'm expecting some good results, this season, because this team's one that's very experienced and it is a good match up with my abilities, now that I have been around this circuit for a full season. It should be a lot of fun," Brook announced.

\* **Troy Wink** has not chauffeured a 358-Modified for some 17-years, but Wink never has lost his desire to strap in, once again. In 2007, Wink is looking to have a little fun, again, getting back behind the wheel and looking forward to racing a full season chauffeuring a pair of self-owned machines at, both, Big Diamond and Grandview on a weekly basis. The opportunity to go racing full-time, once again, has Troy excited, there's little doubt.

"I got very close to my first career win and our team was just getting there as I got out of racing,

back when I raced that old 44 Magnum car," commented Wink. "Once I stopped driving I had some driving opportunities, but nothing came from that. Eventually, I started my own business and we had a baby and I did sponsor a handful of cars through my business, but we just never had the money to do it right. I figured, eventually, if I got back into it again, I'd do it right or I wouldn't do it at all.

"I had four motors built by Larry Lombardo for my cars. I bought the Teo-Pro Car ride that Craig Von Dohren raced with in 2006 at Grandview, plus the Teo Pro Car Duane Howard raced with in 2006, which he raced up at Big Diamond. I bought both of those cars from Chad Sinon and, I feel, they are two of the best cars around. I've had lots of help from Keith Brightbill, getting the both cars ready and Al Finch has also helped out. In the process, we've also built a brand-new Teo-Pro Car chassis for a first-year Sportsman division driver, Codie Berk, who's racing his own number 71 car out of our shop, this year, up at Big Diamond. Codie ran a Slingshot car, last season. He's moving up, this year.

"Back when I raced our car didn't have power steering and it might take me a few weeks of racing to get my feet on the ground again, but I am very confident I'll show I still got it. We'll run the practice session at Grandview and get laps at Big Diamond, even running with the big-block Modified cars to start off the year in April," revealed Troy. "I am racing for fun and I am gunning for my first win steering some good equipment. My wife, Donna, told me if I wanted to do it we're going to go first-class and that's what we'll be doing.

"The two cars numbered 27 are totally Wink Motorsports cars. I own everything we will be racing. I have such great sponsorship support from so many people who have helped me for so many years and they all love local racing. I've got lots of friends like Stephenson Equipment, Willow Creek Fuels, Reading Kubota, Geroni Trucking and so many others. We've had drivers calling us looking for rides, we have had people calling and supporting us and things have really taken off, now that we are back in the local dirt track racing business, again.

"I plan to have fun with all this, being a guest on the Mike Feltenberger hosted 'Strapped In' show at the end of this month. We'll have a nice display at the mall show in Reading in early March with all our cars there and I am excited about my opportunity to get back in a car again. I believe I still got it in me, but if I don't, I've got plenty of people who called and offered to drive for me. It will be an interesting year, I am sure," Wink suggested, with a large, growing smile.

After talking with Troy Wink this weekend, you'd never know he has not raced for such a long time. You could just feel the enthusiasm bubbling, with everybody so anxious, to get this thing going, as we paid an early Saturday afternoon visit to the Wink Motorsports team shop in Leesport, Pa. If Troy Wink isn't successful in 2007, that would be a monumental surprise to many, there's no doubt.

\* Your interest is always welcomed. You can reach Randy Kane, any time, by e-mail at: [racewriter@enter.net](mailto:racewriter@enter.net) with all your team and speedway press releases, news and notes.



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