



## Message from EMPA President, Dino Oberto

Greetings all

*EMPA is an organization of professional writers, broadcasters, announcers, videographers, and photographers working in the motorsports industry, along with Associate and Corporate members.*

I am very happy to announce the winners of the 2020 EMPA/Pocono Raceway Writers Contest. First and foremost, we apologize for the extended wait but as you may well have known our judge and his family was hit hard by COVID-19. He wanted to pass along his thanks for the understanding and patience we had while he and his family dealt with their situation.

Before we present the winners, our judge said how he continues to be impressed with the great quality of writing by everyone. He noted that is a privilege to be able to judge, and how the competition this year had really stepped up. He pointed out several times the professionalism and passion of the organization.

All the submissions were hard-hitting stories and he pointed out how many authors were able to capture some great pieces despite a year inflicted by the virus. There were 18 contestants with a total of 77 entries.

### Pocono Raceway/EMPA 2020 writers contest

#### Feature

##### 1<sup>st</sup> Mike Adaskaveg

“Chance Huston: Fuel Cell Lands on His Car, Fire Erupts” [outsidegroove.com](http://outsidegroove.com), September 10, 2020. Judge’s comment: *“Detailed, descriptive – well done!”*

##### 2<sup>nd</sup> J.A. Ackley

“African American Perspectives on Short-Track Racing” [outsidegroove.com](http://outsidegroove.com) August 13, 2020. Judge’s comment: *“Timely...Interviewer was able to get honest answers from subjects.”*

##### 3<sup>rd</sup> Bruce Bennett

“Tony Ferraiuolo’s Forgotten Car” [Speedway Illustrated](http://Speedway Illustrated), September 2020. Judge’s comment: *“Unique perspective”*

#### Column

##### 1<sup>st</sup> Jeremy Elliott

“Some Sprint Car fans need to change their thinking in the wake of Kyle Larson situation” [SprintCarUnlimited.com](http://SprintCarUnlimited.com), April 16, 2020. Judge’s comment: *“Personal. Persuasive...two signs of a well-written column”*

##### 2<sup>nd</sup> Bruce Bennett

“The Epitome of Class” [Speedway Illustrated](http://Speedway Illustrated), October 2020. Judge’s comment: *“Made me feel like I personally knew the subject.”*

##### 3<sup>rd</sup> John Snyder

“Mark Of A Champion” [Area Auto Racing News](http://Area Auto Racing News), January 21, 2020. Judge’s comment: *“Writer convinced me what it takes to be a champion.”*

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[www.empaonline.org](http://www.empaonline.org)



**Personality Profile—Judge’s note: By far the hardest category to judge...Great submissions!**

**1<sup>st</sup> Mike Adaskaveg**

“Randy Sweet...Remembering a racing icon and innovator” Speedway Illustrated, February 2020.

Judge’s comment: “*Author talked to right people about subject...Delivered a gem!*”

**2<sup>nd</sup> Dick Berggren**

“The Iron Man...He lay in his coffin as it rested on the start-finish line” Speedway Illustrated, September 2020.

Judge’s comment: “*The story had me riveted from beginning to end.*”

**3<sup>rd</sup> Jason Beck**

“This Could Be YOU...An Average Joe’s unusual journey to the Cup Series” Speedway Illustrated, March 2020.

Judge’s comment: “*GREAT read!*”

**Race Report**

**1<sup>st</sup> Jeremy Elliott**

“Kyle Larson pockets \$50,000 in dominating Capitani Classic at Knoxville Raceway” SprintCarUnlimited.com, August 16, 2020.

Judge’s comment: “*Kept me involved from beginning to end. Quotes were well placed.*”

**2<sup>nd</sup> Ron Hedger**

“Sweet Fires Back With Saturday Win At Volusia” SpeedSport.com, February 9, 2020.

Judge’s comment: “*Action was very detailed.*”

**3<sup>rd</sup> Dino Oberto**

“MAKIN’ HISTORY...9-year old racer takes checkers at Evergreen, Mahoning Valley” Standard-Speaker, Hazleton, PA July 16, 2020.

Judge’s comment: “*Something that doesn’t happen often was captured wonderfully.*”

**News**

**1<sup>st</sup> Dino Oberto**

“Chasing a dream...Evergreen champion Moyer stepping up to NASCAR/ARCA” Standard-Speaker, Hazleton, PA October 23, 2020.

Judge’s comment: “*Well constructed...timely quotes...lot of information packed into one story.*”

**2<sup>nd</sup> Jeremy Elliott**

“David Gravel looking to build a home with Big Game Motorsports starting in 2021” SprintCarUnlimited.com, November 4, 2020.

Judge’s comment: “*Newsy, informative...Well written.*”

**3<sup>rd</sup> Steve Barrick**

“Last Minute Decision To Make Trip To South Dakota Pays Off For Zearfoss” Area Auto Racing News, April 28, 2020.

Judge’s comment: “*Nicely done.*”

Congratulations to the winners and top finishers. Likewise, well done everyone who submitted entries. Our heartfelt thanks, also, to Nick Igdalsky and Pocono Raceway for their ongoing and committed support to the contest and EMPA. We will be getting out the checks, plaques and new membership cards to all in short order.

A complete and detailed release from the contests and voting will be on the way.

I’d like to also remind those who may not yet have renewed their 2021 membership to please do so as soon as possible. In closing let me extend my hopes for a safe and exciting 2021 racing season, one captured with great storylines and photos. Keep it professional everyone.

Peace and out—Dino

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