

SIR busy making up for lost race time

By Jarrett Smith, The StarPhoenix June 12, 2009

Drag racing fans in the city will have the opportunity to get their fill of speed and more as Saskatchewan International Raceway gets set to host three straight events starting with tonight's Street Legal Event.

Racers planning on attending are advised to be at the track when the gates open at 5:30 p.m. as a large contingent of racers from all across Saskatchewan is expected. Racing action starts at 6 p.m. and runs until dusk, which means it will be a long night of racing on tap for the drivers as June blesses us with daylight into the later hours of the evening.

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Saturday and Sunday afternoons will feature points races No. 1 and No. 2 as part of a decision to reschedule points race No. 1 for this weekend. The Erin Beck Memorial season opener was originally slated to be run on May 24,

however, Mother Nature had other plans and provided the racers with a steady supply of rain and sent all the racers home early. In honour of Beck, the season opener has been changed to this Sunday and will still feature a tribute to the fallen motorcycle racer prior to the afternoon eliminations.

The spectator gates will not be open on Saturday, so fans can use the pit entrance for parking. Racer gates open at 8 a.m. with qualifying expected to start at 9 a.m. Eliminations begin around 2:30 p.m.

Sunday's event will use the standard format with racer gates opening at 9 a.m., spectator gate at 10 a.m. and racing at 1:30 p.m.

SIR is expecting good car counts on both Saturday and Sunday. Holding back-to-back points races often attracts out of province racers who get more value for their travel dollars.

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Fans who attend this weekend will finally get a chance to see some of the new race cars that were expected to debut at the May 24 race. Steven Koenders of Englefeld was expected to debut his new turbo RX-7 race car, but he hit a snag prior to that race and now is expected to be ready this weekend. Saskatchewan's fastest Honda Civic is also expected to be in attendance as Niko Schneider of Saskatoon will put the final touches on his ET license and will compete in the Sport Compact Division. Furthermore, crowd

favourite Brad Chilliak, with his supercharged, wheel standing '41 Willy's, is expected to be in attendance all three days.

In a special guest appearance on Sunday, SIR is expecting Sherrie Bodnarchuk and the superbird racing alcohol funny car to be in attendance. While at the track, keep an eye out for 2008 Super Pro champion Bill Cawsey's brand new Mustang as well as Pro Champion Dwight Twigge's 1974 Dodge Dart in which the old 360 engine has been scrapped for a much beefier 496 big block. SIR will also give a special welcome back to Warman's own Jr. Dragster competitor Shelby Shultz, who returned to the area last weekend with the prestigious Wally Trophy after winning the NHRA National Open in Ashcroft, B.C.

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On a special note to racers, the weekend of the June 20 and 21 has been designated as track work days in preparation for the feature race on June 27. Please talk to Shawn Zezula this weekend for further details on what's needed.

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