

More Than 50 RC Racers Gather To Enjoy Kewadin Track at St. Ignace



More than 50 people participated in KC Hobbies and Raceway's radio-controlled car racing tournament at St. Ignace's Kewadin Shores Casino Saturday, May 3. Racers enjoyed competing on a 320-foot oval track.

Event Draws Racers From Around Michigan

By Ryan Schlehuber

Three simple rules apply when competing in a radio-control race car tournament: Go fast, turn left, and don't wreck. For more than 50 racers from across the state, one more rule applied during a tournament at Kewadin Shores Casino in St. Ignace Saturday, May 3 - have fun.

Casey Brake of St. Ignace, owner of KC Hobbies and Raceway, who has coordinated weekend tournaments in St. Ignace throughout the winter, hopes this tournament will become an annual event and that more people, of all ages, will get involved.

"We had racers ranging in age from six to 63 years old," he said. "There were over 100 people here at the event and in town, and a lot of them brought their families and enjoyed a weekend vacation and a day of racing."

Sixteen classes of radio-controlled cars were represented in 18 heats. Each car had its own design and style by its owner. The fastest class, the hypodrive modified pan car class, a mini version of NASCAR racing, featured cars that run as fast as 60 miles per hour.

The oval track, inside the "tent" section of the casino, was a little more than 320 feet in circumference, providing racers with two sides, 130 feet long, of straight-away track to speed down.

There was a second track with obstacles that racers enjoyed, as well.

Each racer had his own "pit station" to prepare the cars for racing. Many racers, like Jon Rohn of Carson City, who travel throughout the state to race in tournaments, brought three cars to the tournament. Mr. Rohn said he enjoyed the event.

"Overall, it went pretty good," said Mr. Brake. "I was really happy with it."

Casey Morningstar of St. Ignace, a self-proclaimed radio-controlled racer "gearhead," said many tournaments like Mr. Brake's are started by fellow gearheads and are supported, like a club, by those who enjoy the hobby.

Mr. Brake is raising money to upgrade the tournament's computer system to be able to include more racers and more races next year.

"I'm expecting to bring in twice the number of racers for next year," said Mr. Brake, who plans to hold a similar tournament next May.

Mr. Brake will continue weekend racing in St. Ignace this October, holding it in the small gymnasium of St. Ignace Elementary School.

If he receives enough interest, he may also hold a tournament at the end of June, during the annual Antique Auto Show in St. Ignace.

Local racers at Saturday's tournament included Mr. Morningstar, Josh Colegrove, Mr. Brake's six-year-old son, Casey III, and Lance DeKeyser with his two children, Chase and Logan.

Contact KC Hobbies and Raceway at (231) 445-0958 for information about future events.



Jon Rohn of Carson City performs final maintenance on one of his three radio-controlled cars at his "pit station" before races begin.



St. Ignace's Casey Morningstar (right) has been competitively racing radio-controlled cars for five years. Robert McMurphy of Cheboygan said he has been doing so for 10 years, but also remembers getting into the hobby years before when small, battery-powered, palm-sized "stompers" were the trend.



Above: Race event coordinator Casey Brake of St. Ignace readies to announce the next race. On the right, a line of racers with controllers in hand stand on a raised platform for a better look at the track.

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For more information, contact Ms. Mahlmeister at (231) 436-7003.

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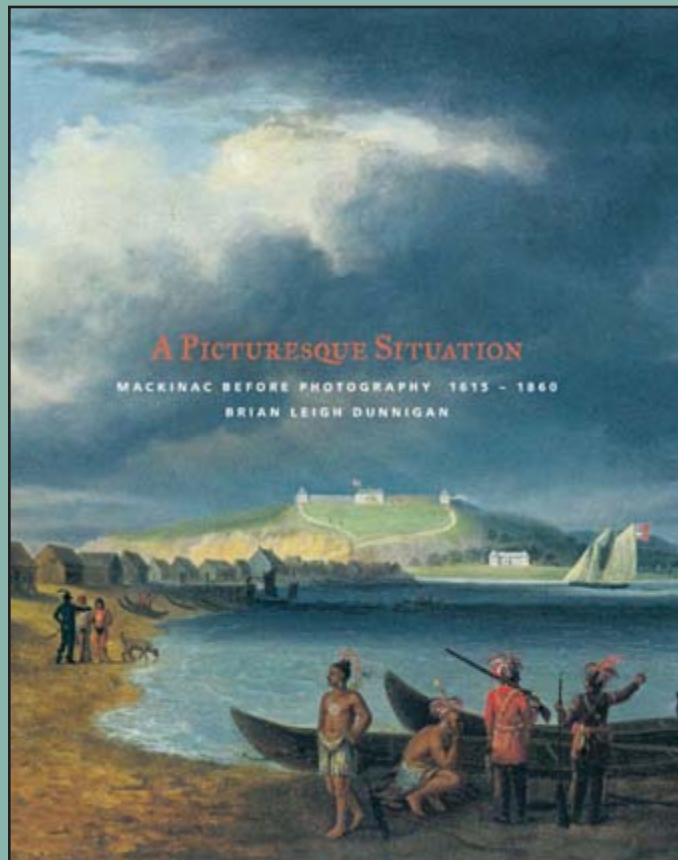
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