

FRIDAY NIGHT THUNDER SEASON 3 EPISODE DESCRIPTIONS

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Episode 1

Title: 993 Days

One Liner

After 993 of closure, Glenn Styres opens his beloved Ohsweken Speedway to sprint car racing and proves why he's still called the Ohsweken Flyer.

Short Description

The pandemic shut down Ohsweken Speedway for 993 days and while Glenn Styres still mourns the loss of his mother and a young teammate, he reopens the speedway and races his way to one of his best finishes in years.

Long Description

After being shut down for 993 days due to the pandemic, Glenn Styres is reopening Ohsweken Speedway and racing again after taking a break due to concussions and doctor's orders. Toward the end of the pandemic, Glenn lost his mother to non-COVID illnesses and a young racing teammate to a motorcycle accident. Tonight is his first real race in a long time and although he feels that void and is still grieving, he is determined to show his fans that there's still a reason he is nicknamed the Ohsweken Flyer. The drivers are happy to be back at the speedway, especially the Indigenous drivers who are neighbours to the speedway and had been forced to race at other tracks in 2021. Now back on home turf, all the drivers are ready to go, albeit a little rusty from the time off. But there's no rust on Glenn, who races to the best finish he's had in years. While surrounded by family in his pit at the end of the night, Glenn celebrates his good night and is quite sure that his mom was watching him from above the entire time.

Episode 2

Title: Crusty and Rusty, Not So Dusty

One Liner

From spinouts to missed setups, the crate drivers have a lot to contend with on the first day back at their home track.

Short Description

It's opening day but this time for the crate sprint drivers who haven't raced at Ohsweken Speedway for over two years and are met with challenges, mishaps and disappointing results for most of them.

Long Description

After more than two years, the crate sprint drivers make their return to Ohsweken Speedway, which most of them consider their "backyard track" as it resides right in their community of Six Nations of the Grand River, or Ohsweken. While most of them raced the year before at other local tracks, they haven't experienced the hammer-down speedy track that is Ohsweken Speedway for some time and it will take some getting used to, as is demonstrated by their mishaps and challenges throughout opening night. From car fires to spinouts to missed setups, these drivers have a lot to contend with and to improve on if they want a fighting chance at a win this season.

Episode 3

Title: The Pure Rookie

One Liner

Meet #420, Victor Bomberry, who hits the track in a crate sprint with absolutely zero experience in a race car. Ever.

Short Description

Victor Bomberry is well-known in the Six Nations community as an entrepreneur but today he hits the oval as a race car driver in the crate sprint class, demonstrating immediate aptitude and the fearlessness he says his dad instilled in him from a very young age.

Long Description

Victor Bomberry, #420, watched his dad race thunder stocks at Ohsweken Speedway and always said one day he would race there too. Victor's best friend Jordan Hill is also a crate sprint driver and influenced Victor to get in the car. Together they're now Bomberry racing and Victor has arrived on this night to wheel a race car for the very first time. As a pure rookie, he has never been in a race car, never mind a ferocious sprint car. But Victor is fearless and lives by that. His late father, Victor AKA Yogi, was a brilliant and creative entrepreneur who always encouraged Victor to be fearless and they are now words that he lives by while he continues to run all the businesses left to him and his siblings when his father passed just over ten years ago. Victor proves he is fearless by going out on the track for the first time with no experience and genuinely pushing his limits. His night is going good until he finds his limits in the B-Main, hitting the wall and spinning out. But through it all, Victor is laughing and smiling, proving to us that this is all about having fun, which he is also very good at doing.

We also meet the legendary Turner family, who have been racing in Southern Ontario for three generations. This family has taken Allan Downey, 19D, under their wing and believe in Allan's ability so much that they're willing to trust him with all their racing knowledge.

Glenn unfortunately has to start the 360 feature in the back since he forgot to go to the scales for technical inspection after he won his heat, putting him at a great disadvantage in the A-Main.

Matt Hill, #MK8, finally wins a race. It's a B-Main race, but it's a win nonetheless and a shot of confidence that Matt badly needs.

Episode 4

Title: The Sons Are Shining

One Liner

Victor Bomberry, #420, returns with a great start to the night, only to end in disappointment and hard-learned lessons.

Short Description

Victor Bomberry, #420, shares his story of sobriety and returns to the oval for his second time with a great start to the night, only to learn later that he needs to be able to hear the race director and follow instructions or be slapped with a harsh penalty.

Long Description

Victor Bomberry, #420, shares his story of sobriety and how he learned the value of working hard from his father Yogi, who died from alcoholism in his fifties. With his fearless attitude, Victor hits the oval for a second time and does really well, transferring into feature after passing two cars in the B-Main. But the glory was short lived when he fails to hear the race director commands on his radio, which had become unplugged, unbeknownst to him, earning him his first black flag/disqualification.

Liam Martin, #9 on Dan "Hodge" Nanticoke's Nitro 54 Team, has his best night of racing yet, resulting in an emotional moment for his father Steve.

Allan Downey, #19D, experiences his first really bad damage when he runs into a stalled lapped car on the track and Aaron Turkey, #68, proves to be a worthy opponent to his idol Glenn Styres.

Episode 5

Title: It's Sacking Season

One Liner

After a terrible running of the Canadian Sprint Car Nationals for Glenn Styres, #0, the axe falls on a vital crew member.

Short Description

At the 16th Canadian Sprint Car Nationals, Glenn Styres, #0, has concerns about the condition of his tires and believes they are connected to his poor performance. But when he is unheard, Glenn is forced to take drastic measures the day after the big event.

Long Description

This is the weekend of the long awaited 16th Canadian Sprint Car Nationals at Ohsweken Speedway, which were meant to be run in 2020 but were postponed due to the pandemic. This highly anticipated event has never been won by a home track driver and every team has their eyes on the huge \$10,000 prize for the first place 360 sprint driver.

Everything seems to be going well with the event, but in the GSR pit, Glenn Styres is mired down by a car he can't seem to control. It's spinning out and feels like he's on ice. He's convinced his tires are not being prepped properly by his crew chief Kevin Loveys. He voices his concerns and also compares his tires to the rest of his team and he notes that his tires are the only ones that have had no grooving or siping, which are both crucial for the tires to have more grip on the track. Kevin, however, believes that when he preps Glenn's tires, the blocks rip off. They're at a stalemate and Glenn goes out for his feature in dead last and the results of the race are infuriating to the team owner, who decides to take drastic measures after the big event by firing Kevin.

The Turner Family shares their racing story which is three generations in the making and in a satisfying turn, one of the sons wins the Canadian Sprint Car Nationals 360 division, taking home the trophy and the \$10,000. It's the first time a home track driver has won this race in 16 years.

Episode 6

Title: Sweatin' Lacrosse Balls

One Liner

Joshua Hill, #99, demonstrates the spirit of giving back while track communication issues cause anger among some drivers.

Short Description

Joshua Hill, #99, along with friends and family orchestrate a massive lacrosse stick giveaway to help kids in the community, reminding us of the importance of giving back, but the night proves to be challenging due to communication issues by track officials.

Long Description

It's a scorching hot day at the track and also the day that Joshua Hill, #99, has orchestrated a massive lacrosse stick giveaway for the kids. He was inspired to do something with lacrosse in memory of his nephew, Vern, who was a lacrosse player that passed away the year before in a car wreck. Along with friends, Brandon and Riley, the Hill Bros discuss the importance of lacrosse in their community, noting that the sport is a medicine game that helps kids feel less alone.

After a very long excruciating wait in their cars on the warmup track during a bike giveaway, five Friday Night Thunder crate drivers hit the track for the B-Main, with all of them transferring to the A-Main. But, because there was such a long delay for a bike giveaway, all the drivers that transferred only have minutes to prep their cars and line up for the A-Main. In the feature, all of the drivers show improvement by moving up, but Allan Downey, #19D, must settle for 5th after starting on the pole.

The lacrosse stick giveaway is rushed, but it is met with heartwarming enthusiasm by kids eagerly reaching for a stick. Joshua is disappointed that he didn't have enough sticks to go around and challenges all the "rich guys" to do something to give back too.

Glenn Styres is happy with his new crew chief and finishes first in his heat but he gets too aggressive with his top wing in the feature and moves backwards. Despite that, he is optimistic about their approach and the improvements he is feeling in the car and on the track.

Episode 7

Title: Smart and Patient is Fast

One Liner

Allan Downey rides a rollercoaster of events and emotions after his car is junked in a hotly debated racing incident.

Short Description

Allan Downey, #19D, finds himself embroiled in a contentious aftermath of a heat race wreck with another driver, forcing him to build a new car with the help of some friends, only to become entangled with the same driver again a week later.

Long Description

Allan Downey, #19D, also known as the Professor, is one of the fiercest competitors on the track but he's also known as a good guy that takes racing very seriously. On this day, Allan hits the track for his heat race with high hopes as usual, proclaiming that smart and patient is fast but that it's also important to be aggressive, especially on the Ohsweken track.

His heat race starts as any would and he makes solid gains to catch the 2M car, beginning some slide job action that sees the two cars getting dangerously close. After Allan slide jobs the 2M in turn 4, they make contact in turn 1, sending Allan spinning to the high side of the track and with nowhere to go, another car slams him, junking his car.

Back at the pits, Allan is unsure what happened but the common belief among his team and their friends, was that he was intentionally spun out. Some would simply call this a "racing deal" but Allan sees it another way. Tensions are high between the 2M and 19D pits but there's no altercation. Allan declares that their season may be done considering the extensive damage to the car.

Later that night, Jamie Turner from Burger Barn Racing, informs the 19D team that he has a car at his shop that they could build in the morning so he can race that night in the Action Sprint Tour at Merritville Speedway. Allan eagerly accepts this offer and by morning, there's a gang of people at the Turner shop stripping the old junked car and building a new one. They get a car built brand new and head to Merritville where Allan goes back in the heat race due to a blown tire, but ends up going 14th to 5th in the feature. This is an outstanding result for a driver who had to hustle all day to build a brand-new car and drive it for the first time that night, especially after a devastating wreck that would keep a lot of drivers off the dirt for a while.

But that glory was short lived when Allan's brakes fail post-race in the feature the next Friday at Ohsweken Speedway and he rear-ends the 2M car before they're off the track, causing damage to the other car and ripping off Allan's nose wing. But a cardinal sin was made by the 2M team when they entered the 19D pit with the intention of fighting over the incident. Both drivers are reprimanded by track management and forced to shake hands or they won't be able to continue racing there. Allan learned the hard way that he should take heed of his own mantra: smart and patient is fast.

Episode 8

Title: Remembering Ricky

One Liner

Derek Miller, #38, spends time remembering his best friend who tragically died in a motocross accident many years ago.

Short Description

Derek Miller, #38, decides to race his first time mid-season while also revisiting his past in a tearful meeting with the mother of his childhood best friend, Ricky, who tragically died in a motocross accident when they were teenagers.

Long Description

Derek Miller, #38, doesn't race much this season due to work obligations, but he decides last minutes to swap out the engine of his car with the help of his sister, "Squeal," and get on the track the next day. He doesn't have a lot of high hopes, he just wants to get out for a race and have some fun. But lately he's also been thinking a lot about his childhood best friend, Ricky Joseph, who took Derek under his wing and helped him learn motocross racing when Derek was only 14 years old.

Derek revered Ricky for his grace and skill on the bike and remembers it like it was yesterday and still misses him immensely. So, he decides to go visit Ellie Joseph, Ricky's mom and they sit down to remember him together. Derek isn't there long before he is overtaken by emotion, which Ellie encourages him to feel. Together they connect on their love for racing and we find out that Ellie took up motocross herself for a while, in order to stay connected to the racing world and Ricky. They both feel there's a calming and healing aspect to racing.

Ellie shares the story behind Ricky's accident that sent him to the hospital with a smashed jaw and massive head injuries and that he passed away in hospital days later. Derek had been home in Six Nations, where at that time, he heard the news through the moccasin telegraph and it was entirely destabilizing and devastating to him. He felt like he lost his big brother.

After a very emotional visit, Derek's back racing at Ohsweken for his first and only time this season in his #38 car, which performs well, but Derek has arm cramps and almost can't finish the race. All in all, considering he hasn't raced at all, Derek does well and proclaims that racing has saved his life...a couple of times.

Episode 9

Title: The Hornet's Nest

One Liner

It's disaster for Joshua Hill after clawing his way through the B-Main while Glenn's former crew chief gets the glory.

Short Description

After clawing his way through the B-Main, the feature race spells disaster for Joshua Hill, #99 while Glenn's disgraced crew chief finds redemption with his new driver at the 17th Canadian Sprint Car Nationals.

Long Description

Glenn and his daughters and ex-wife Tina get together to share stories and challenges the family faced in the early days of Ohsweken Speedway. The girls express concerns over Glenn's decision to start racing again despite doctor's orders to stay off the track, but nothing will stop Glenn from racing. They talk about how they created many events like the Canadian Sprint Car Nationals and tonight is the 17th running of the event which carries a \$10k prize for the top 360 Sprint Car and was postponed from 2021 due to the pandemic.

The Hill Bros haven't had a great season of racing and tonight they feel they need to make some moves but don't fare so well in the heats and have to make their way through the B-Main. In a tense race, the Hill Bros battle with another car for the final two transfer spots like they are fighting for their lives, and the Hill Bros prevail, beating out the third car and clinching the last two spots into the A-Main. After the race, Joshua declares that the Crate feature will be a "hornet's nest out there", and he wasn't wrong.

In the feature, another car is seen bumping Joshua from the back, spinning him out and sending him to the middle of the track where he's clobbered by an oncoming car, completely wrecking the 99 machine. In victory lane, the driver that bumped him, Jacob Dykstra, says he had "nowhere to go", but the video shows a different story. In order to race on the second night of this event, Joshua will have to completely rebuild his car and has to amass parts overnight in order to do so, but doesn't have the resources to do so.

While the 360 Feature, carrying a \$10K prize is running, Joshua takes stock of all the parts he needs and wonders when or if he will want to or be able to fix the car in time for racing in night two of the nationals.

On the track simultaneously, the #10 car of Paulie Colagiovanni is about to pick up the win and the \$10,000 and we're reminded by the announcers that the crew chief for the #10 car is none other than Kevin Loveys, who was recently fired by Glenn Styres. Paulie picks up the win and the money, while Glenn doesn't fare so well and has to have a chat with his new crew chief about his poor performing car when he gets off the track.

Joshua isn't sure he'll even try to fix his car for the next night and walks away in anger and frustration.

Episode 10

Title: Hometown Hero

One Liner

Aaron Turkey has a defining moment at the Pinty's NASCAR race while Joshua hustles, successfully, to turn things around.

Short Description

The inaugural Pinty's NASCAR race finally arrives at Ohsweken Speedway and Aaron Turkey proves to be a hometown hero in the historic event, while Joshua Hill hustles, successfully, to get his car back on the track after wrecking the night before.

Long Description

It's been three years in the making, but the Pinty's NASCAR race on dirt finally arrives at Ohsweken Speedway after being delayed by the pandemic. Aaron Turkey and Glenn Styres are both entered into the NASCAR race, but it's Aaron that wins the Quickwick Hotlaps challenge the first night, kicking off his first ever NASCAR event with a bang. The remainder of his race is wrought with challenges and after having to restart at the back a couple of times, he makes an impressive run with incredible tenacity to finish mid-pack for a great showing at the inaugural event. An emotional Aaron celebrates at the end, remembering how far he's come since he was a kid with racing dreams, just around the corner from the speedway.

Joshua Hill hustles since early morning to put his car back together after being spun out in the feature race on night one, causing major damage and threatening to end his season. In a major twist, he not only gets his car back on the track in time, but he gets into the feature through the B-Main, while most of the the Friday Night Thunder drivers fail to transfer. He has a solid run, despite his car barely getting fixed in time and is satisfied his hustle paid off.

Allan Downey has an emotional moment when he returns from the pits to find out he ran third fastest overall in the time trials to qualify for the A-Main race.

Episode 11

Title: Dude, Where's My Brakes?

Logline

Aaron Turkey's night begins with a fast car, a top gun award and failed brakes and ends with a heartbreaking feature race.

Short Description

Aaron Turkey's entire night is wild, starting with a heat race win, a top gun award and failed brakes as he narrowly misses people as he speeds through the tech barn and it all ends in heartache in the feature race when he makes on small error.

Long Description

Aaron Turkey, #68, has had loyal pit crew members since he was in the crate division and they're his longtime friends from Six Nations, Wes and Riley. These guys know what Aaron needs for his setups and Aaron admits he needed to step away and let them do their jobs because they know what they're doing.

On this Championship night at Ohsweken Speedway, Aaron wins and also receives the Top Gun award but his glory is short lived when he blazes right through the tech barn with failed brakes, narrowly missing speedway staff in the process. He's so apologetic and had no idea he had no brakes until he was approaching the tech barn, where he had to stop as the winner, for tech inspection. Normally if a driver misses the tech barn, they are disqualified, but in this case, they allowed Aaron to keep his spot, noting that he tried to stop for inspection and he couldn't have known his brake rotor sheared off.

The time seems to race by at a breakneck speed as the loyal 68 crew replaces the entire rear end of the car. Aaron waits in the cockpit as his name is called to line up while the team finishes the repairs. As they're about to lower the car, they realize they forgot to drill holes for the bleeders and have to remove the rear tires to add the bleeders back on, taking more time while Aaron waits, heart thumping, in the seat of the car while his name is called over and over to line up.

Aaron makes it on to the track and his car is still fast. He jockeys over and over for first place and finally has it, holding on to it after a few red and yellow flags and restarts. But on the final turn, Ryan Turner sneaks up on him and Aaron makes a split-second decision to go low, which ultimately loses him the race.

Aaron realizes his mistake but takes second place with grace, vowing that he'll get his first 360 Ohsweken win in 2023.

Johnny Miller, #20, has an opportunity to race a GSR 360 car and after a daytime practice two days before, he's jumping in and he does very well, transferring from the B-Main after going 8th to 4th and then goes 24th to 18th in the feature which is an excellent effort for a first-time 360 driver. But, he wants to win in the crate division before committing to the 360.

Episode 12

Title: Crate Class and the Kid

One Liner

After a rough season, young Ashton Vanevery finds redemption with a legendary run at the first crate nationals event.

Short Description

It's been a rough season for 16-year-old Ashton Vanevery, who finds redemption and takes home a top honour at the inaugural Canadian Crate Sprint Car Nationals and Glenn Styres reminisces about the creation of the crate class at Ohsweken Speedway.

Long Description

Ashton Vanevery, #77E, is only 16 years old but he already knows that racing is the only thing he wants to do in life. He's been practicing on the iRacing simulator, but has been experiencing a rough season going into tonight's inaugural Canadian Crate Sprint Car Nationals at Ohsweken Speedway. After a disappointing heat race, he has to race his way to a transfer spot in the B-Main, which he does handily. Ashton remarks prior to the feature race that he'll go out there and win the hard charger, a top honour for the driver that passes the most cars in a single race.

In the feature, Ashton starts way back in 30th place, a daunting place to be. But he immediately starts picking off cars as his dad watches on with excitement. Ashton ends the race 17 spots ahead and is awarded the Hard Charger! It's a triumphant and unbelievable moment for the young gun and his dad and crew.

Allan Downey also came very close to winning the hard charger starting 21st and finishing 7th, but Ashton beat him by four spots for the honour.

Brian Nanticoke was out of the feature race with a broken torsion arm and Joshua Hill got taken out in the B-Main race and had too much damage to even consider coming back for the last race of the season. Johnny Miller enjoyed a great feature race, finishing 10th from 17th.

Glenn Styres talks about the creation of the crate class and how it all unfolded at Ohsweken Speedway despite the skepticism around the idea.

Episode 13

Title: Where's Alex?

One Liner

Alex Hill, #77x, has been out all season with anxiety issues but decides to try one race in Texas before the season ends.

Short Description

Alex Hill, #77x, who hasn't raced all season due to anxiety, tries one race at Devil's Bowl Speedway in Texas where she has a panic attack prior to hot laps, but with the help of her team and family she overcomes her fears and gets in one night of racing.

Long Description

Alex Hill, #77x, is one of very few women who compete in sprint car racing in North America and is the only Indigenous woman driver in the entire field. This season, she has been sitting out of racing due to extreme anxiety issues she experienced in the car the year before. Her openness about her anxiety prompted support to pour in from other drivers and fans, helping her to take action and get help. By the time she gets to Devil's Bowl Speedway in Texas toward the end of the race season, Alex has been working with therapists and feels like she's ready to try again after a 13 months absence from racing,

Before hot laps, Alex starts to experience a panic attack in the seat of her car, but her team helps calm her and get her out. After barely accelerating, Alex starts to hit the gas, noting after hot laps that her heart fell into her stomach and she had to slow down a bit. But then she got the feeling back and she calmed down and her ability to race returned to her. She returns to her pit with renewed confidence.

The night goes as expected with okay results but she doesn't make it in to the feature race. The next night she says she'll get quick time in the time trial qualifiers and she does exactly that to the delight of her family and fans. The quick time is all she needs. She never gets into a feature race at Devil's Bowl but she overcame her fears and feels she can get behind the wheel again.

But things take a devastating turn when everyone is returning to Canada the next day when the news spreads that a young Glenn Styres Racing team member, Noelle Teal, has died from a motorcycle accident.

The news topples the entire racing community. Noelle Teal, #14, was only 21 years old and a fixture at Ohsweken Speedway on the GSR team. Alex acknowledges Noelle's death, saying that they were very close and it was a very difficult loss for everyone, including herself.