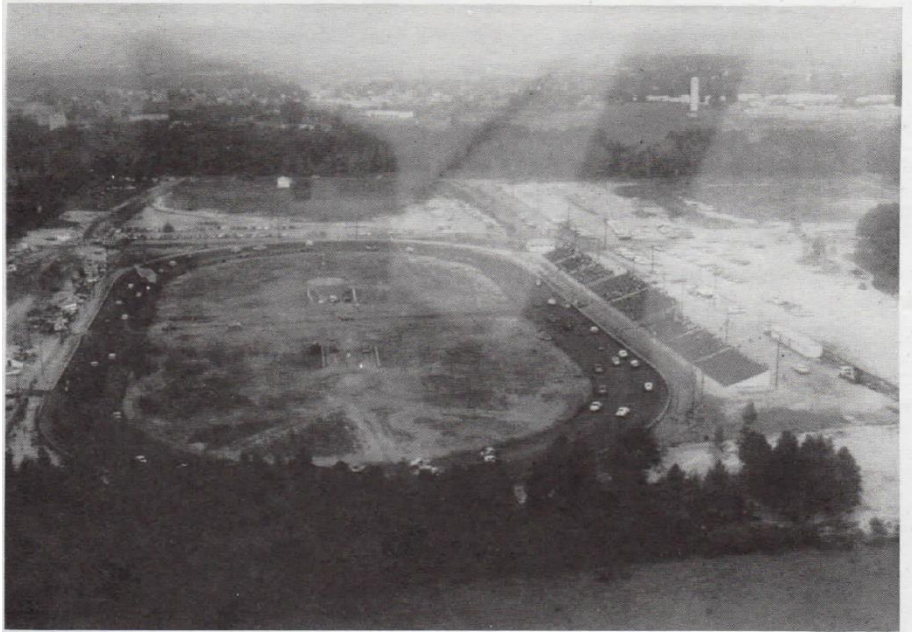


## PHOTO TRIVIA

from the Spring, 2018 issue



Aerial photo of East Windsor Speedway. (Ace Lane photo)

*Can you identify this popular NJ race track? Sadly, it closed in 2002.*

Okay, the caption gives it away. It's East Windsor Speedway.

The site was originally the home of Hightstown Speedway, a 1/5 mile dirt oval which operated from 1950 to October 17, 1951, and in paved form from May 3, 1952 through 1960. The original track also operated as Central Jersey Speedway and Airport Junction Speedway (it was built on the site of the old Hightstown Airport.) The original track was torn down in 1965 when owner Don Jones built the new half-mile track, changing the layout so that the former Hightstown Speedway became part of the new spectator parking lot.

On Friday night, June 11, 1965, a new era of dirt track stock car racing began in NJ with the grand opening of the half-mile East Windsor Speedway. You couldn't ask for a better opening night – beautiful weather and a packed grandstand. The legendary announcer Nat Kleinfield worked the microphone and colorful Tex Enright waved the flags. The night began with first-class showmanship: Sonny Strupp, driving his red coupe #24 and Bob Pickell, in Joe Racz's yellow and black coupe #41 made a slow lap around the track with a ribbon suspended between the two cars. Upon returning to the start/finish line, township Mayor Frank Matheson cut the ribbon as a beaming Don Jones looked on. The new track was officially open!

At the end of the night, East Windsor Speedway had its first feature winners. Russ Hoek had the honor of being the first Modified-Sportsman winner at the new track. Bob Pickell finished a close second with Bob Malzahn third. Bob Smith was the first Limited Sportsman feature winner. Second through fifth places were Ronnie Broadwater, Leon Harrison, Lee Sofield, and "Big Will" Edwards.

East Windsor was leased a few times over the years to Ken Brenn, Sr., Joe Scamardella and Lindy Vicari, but the track was best known for the Jones family promoting most of the events. The "it's my way or the highway" attitude occasionally saw top competitors like Billy Pauch and Doug Hoffman suspended from competition.

East Windsor was known for its Modified racing until the RSCA days of Lindy Vicari came to a close on November 2, 1980. Jimmy Horton won that event, which was the last Modified feature held at the track that featured a full field of only Modified cars. Don Jones resumed promoting his family-owned track in 1981. EWS became one of the first racetracks to feature Small Block Modifieds as the headline division. The track would never again be run by anyone other than a member of the Jones family. Soon after the switch was made to Small Blocks, the township began to complain about speedway noise. EWS was the first to have a strict noise ordinance placed upon it. The track made street legal mufflers mandatory and on all racecars and even had a device located at the start/finish line to disqualify any car that exceeded the level of noise the township would permit. The track hosted one DIRT-sanctioned Modified event which was won by Phil Meisner. Jimmy Horton was the track's all-time Modified winner and Doug Hoffman was the all-time Small Block Modified winner.

Sadly, East Windsor Speedway fell to the real estate developer, like so many other tracks. Closing night was held on August 23, 2002. Doug Hoffman won the last SBM feature that night, followed by Donny Radd, Billy Pauch, Sr., Kenny Brightbill and Wade Hendrickson. The last Sportsman feature was won by Stan Janiszewski, with John Scheidler, John Romano, Jr., Lowell Snyder, and Rick Holsten filling out the top five. Top five Street Stock finishers were Rob Ormsbee, Pat Freiberger, Carol Whitehouse, Rocco Infante, and Frank Dorry, Jr. The 2002 division champions were Kenny Brightbill (Small Block Modified), Richie Pratt, Jr. (Sportsman) and Al Cheney, III (Street Stock).

Sources: Earl Krause, Editorial Assistant, Area Auto Racing News and GSVSCC Historian; Allan E. Brown, *The History of America's Speedways: Past & Present*; Wheels of Speed ([www.nj3.com](http://www.nj3.com)).



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