

AMSOIL Championship Off Road round three recap

Champions get crowned in Crandon, and while the official World Championship race is set for Labor Day weekend, the Big House was full of championship contenders as rounds three and four of the 2021 AMSOIL Championship Off-Road season invaded Crandon International Raceway this weekend.

On Saturday, the stars came out and flexed their championship contending chops. From current title holders to past winners, the opening day of Spring Crandon allowed fellow racers and fans remember who sits atop the Champ Off Road throne.

LeDuc Tops in Talent-ed Pro 4 Field

Kyle LeDuc had to regroup after a challenging opening weekend in Antigo that saw the defending Pro 4 champion fail to finish both races. But LeDuc regrouped and returned for round three determined to right the ship.

First, LeDuc would have to get around a resurgent Adrian Cenni, who found the lead after mastering the land rush start and coming through turn one clean. LeDuc kept up the pressure and on lap four he secured the lead. He went unchecked for the remainder of the race, picking up his first win of the year and his third Crandon victory in the past four attempts.

“So much rides on that start,” said LeDuc. “We got a great snap off the start, got some contact with RJ (Anderson) and then I saw Cenni up front. I tried to go for it early, but I tried to be smart and picked him off. The track was so slippery. You guys (the fans), I wish you could go stand in turn three, you would be on your butt in two seconds. And we are hitting it at 80 MPH. I got past Cenni clean and then just put the truck on sail.”

For the next several laps, Cenni held a firm grip on the runner-up spot, even with pressure from points leader CJ Greaves. On lap nine, Cenni was forced to pull off the racetrack, putting Greaves in second. He was unable to track down LeDuc but was able to hold off his father and teammate Johnny Greaves

The elder Greaves' race to the podium started by getting caught up in a first

lap incident, but he was on a mission after that. He moved up at least one spot each lap after starting 13th before gaining control of the final podium spot with three laps to go.

Kincaid Cranks Out Another Crandon Win

It's usually a good bet that Keegan Kincaid will find success at Crandon, especially during the annual Forest County Potawatomi Brush Run held each June. With his race shop just a few miles down the road, the home-grown product has been winning races at the Big House for nearly a decade. He found a way to win again on Saturday.

Mickey Thomas jumped out in front with a big hole shot coming off the land rush start and turn one. He was in control for the first few laps, leading a field of 24 Pro 2's around the speed Crandon track. Two minutes into the race, however, Thomas was forced to retire with a mechanical.

That put Trevor Leighton momentarily into the lead, with Kincaid and former West Coast champion Jerett Brooks into third. Two laps later, Kincaid would move out front, and with nothing but clean air, the 2019 champ was on cruise control as he drove to his third straight win to start the new season.

“I drew an eight (on the inversion) and I wasn't very happy with that,” said Kincaid. “The car started way out there, but the Cooper Tires hooked up and gave us a great hole shot. It reminded me of my dad, back in the day, riding that outside wall. I worked my way to the lead before half-way and actually ran out of tear-offs, but it was fortunate that I was out front. Basically, just took it from there and got the win.”

Leighton would prove his fast start was not a fluke as he pressured Kincaid before getting into a battle with Brooks, Ricky Gutierrez, and Cory Winner. Leighton held off the swarm through the mandatory caution, but contact gave the former snocross racer a flat rear tire and allowed Brooks to move past. But in the

same move that allowed Brooks to go into second, Gutierrez made an aggressive pass on both Leighton and Brooks. With only a few laps left, Gutierrez held off Brooks for second.

Winner worked his way up from seventh to finish fourth. Ryan Beat, who is running a Pro Spec truck this season, worked his way up from tenth to fifth.

Greaves Gets it Done in Pro Lite

Kyle Greaves championship hopes in 2020 were dashed due to an average finishing position of ninth at the three rounds held at Crandon International Raceway. On Saturday, Greaves reversed his struggling trend in convincing fashion.

Dillon Pointon held the early edge as he led the field through turn one, but Greaves didn't let him keep it as he took the top position by riling the outside line of the big, sweeping gravel pit turn. Through the mandatory caution and another late race caution that momentarily stopped the race, Greaves held the fastest truck in the Pro Lite. His first class win at Crandon was a relief as they now look forward to future success at the Big House.

“Crandon has been getting the best of me for years,” said Greaves, “and we finally beat Crandon. So, from here on out, it's moving forward and hopefully we can do it again tomorrow.”

Round two winner Brock Heger did everything he could to catch and try to pass Greaves. He was close to the eventual race winner with two laps to go before the final caution flag came out. Despite a leaking rear tire, Heger was able to keep Greaves close for second, even with a flat-out charge from Madix Bailey over the last several laps.

With Bailey in third, Pointon came through in fourth and Ronnie Anderson rounded out the top five.

Father-Son Fill Up Pro Mod Podium

Early in Saturday's Pro Mod SXS race it looked like CanAm's Kyle Chaney was going to



Pro 2 Podium. Photos Courtesy of ISOC Racing.



Pro 4 Podium. Photos Courtesy of ISOC Racing.

cruise to a second straight win, but six laps in, Chaney was forced to pull off the track. That allowed a pair of Yamaha's to battle it out for the win, and bragging rights at the dinner table.

Behind Chaney sat the father-son combination of Rodney and Owen VanEperen. The two were nose-to-tail as they tried to chase down the race leader. When the leader pulled off, the race between familiar foes took on a whole new meaning, but it was held at the same intensity as if the two were fighting for last. Each time around, Rodney kept his son in check, even though there was less than a car length of separation most of the time. In the end, the elder

VanEperen took the win, with the kid finishing second, saying his dad ran a perfect race in the post-race interview.

“It didn't feel perfect,” said Rodney VanEperen. “We chose a tire that was really grooved, but it really had tons of grip, and every corner we were hucking it in and sliding. I was on pins and needles the whole time out there.”

Round one winner Andrew Carlson (Polaris) put in another spirited run to the podium, finishing third. Brian Waszak secured another top five finish in fourth, with Robert Loire rounding out the top five.

Heger Holds Off Greaves in Pro Stock SXS

It's going to be a season-long slugfest for Pro Stock SXS supremacy between CJ Greaves and Brock Heger. The two Yamaha-backed drivers came into Crandon 1-2 in points after they split the season opening weekend in Antigo. In Crandon, it was another close finish between the frontrunners, this time with Heger holding off a hard-charging Greaves for his second straight win.

Coming out of turn one, Heger and Greaves keeping track of one another in fourth and fifth. Two laps in, Greaves made a series of moves that moved him from third to first, but Heger was in tow, gaining second. For the next few laps, the pair