**UPIR Prepares for 2015 Season**

After a successful 2014 racing season, the Upper Peninsula International Raceway is preparing for another exciting year of racing in Escanaba. The 2014 racing year provided some of the most exciting and memorable moments both on and off the UPIR dirt track. The season was kicked off in a big way with NASCAR driver Ken Schrader racing his modified in the season opening event. Schrader would win the event, racing from the back to the front in the 25 lap race. In the following months the action on track picked up with three and four wide racing and many races being decided on last lap passes. Needless to say, 2015 looks good for the Upper Peninsula International Raceway.

Returning to action this year are the same six racing divisions that brought so much excitement to the UPIR track last year. These divisions include the Modifieds, Street Stocks, 500 Micro Sprints, 600 Micro Sprint, Sport Fours, and the Junior Micro Sprints. Each respective division had many moments to remember, and many different winners. However, at the end of the season each division crowned a champion. The champions are as follows: Junior Micro Sprints- Dylan Larsen, 500 Micro Sprints- Kristy Peterson, 600 Micro Sprints- Josh Bartel, Sport Fours- Erik Marenger, Street Stocks- Rob Willis, and Modifieds- Dale Peterson. Also returning to the track this year are the always entertaining Vintage Modifieds which will be at the track on July 18th.

One thing that won’t be returning this year is the old clay track surface, as new clay has been laid down. This new clay was purchased last year, with the clay laying process beginning after last year’s season conclusion. Once Winter set in, the clay would have to wait to be put down until this Spring. The new clay being put down was done so in hopes of improving track conditions, which will in time lead to better racing, and more fun for the fans!

Prior to the beginning of the season fans can see the race cars on display on May 2nd at the Island Resort and Casino from 11AM to 2PM. The engines will roar to life twice in May, with two practice sessions being scheduled for May 9th and May 16th. The competitive racing season is set to kick off on June 6th, with racing slated to begin at 6PM. Prices also remain the same family affordable price of FIVE Dollars per person, with children 10 and under FREE. UPIR Racing kicks off in just a few short weeks, and from the looks of it, the excitement level will be off the charts!

By Todd Rose