



By EARL WATT

- Leader & Times

After a cool front moves through Liberal today and Wednesday, the weekend is expected to heat up at the Seward County Speedway when a full season of racing returns to Liberal.

The first event is the Stroker Ace Nationals, and the two-day show will include IMCA stock cars, sport-modifieds, hornets and hobbies.

There will be a test day Thursday for the drivers and their pit crews, and it will be their first ride on the modified track that promoter Glen Thompson has been smoothing out during the off-season.

“Where I started is where the track has been for about eight years,” Thompson said. “I widened the track 20 feet and banked the entire track. We painted the front stretch wall. We put new tires around the track for added safety. Basically, we rebuilt the entire track.”

Those enhancements are good for the drivers, but they will also provided added thrills for the fans.

“It will give the cars more momentum and more speed,” Thompson said. “There will be more side-by-side racing.”

That means more passing lanes, and the lead could change hands several times in a race. On the old, narrow track, it was more difficult to have a chance to get around a driver who might attempt to simply block a driver.

In addition to the track enhancements, there will be fun fan contests.

“We are will have a Burt Reynolds moustache contest,” Thompson said. “We will also have a Loni Anderson look-alike contest, and we will have a guy in chicken suit.”

Admission for Friday and Saturday will be \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids between the ages of 6 and 11. Kids 5 and under are free.

The event will begin a season of nine shows that will bring sprints and stock cars but will also feature monster trucks and a meltdown fire truck display.