

Pirelli Moose Racing Maxxis

AMA MID-SOUTH CROSS COUNTRY ATV MOTORSPORTS CHAMPIONSHIP
THE BATTLE OF IUKA

Ockerman on It

BY DEBBIE ALLEN

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Whenever **Bill Balance** comes to an event, it tends to turn heads. However, when he comes in second, it causes a double take. At least, that is what happened when **Donnie Ockerman** won the fifth round of the **AMA Sanctioned Mid-South Cross Country** racing series. He not only proved that he has what it takes to beat the multi time, National Champion but also that it can be truly humbling to race and win with a cause.



Naturally, Yamaha / Precision / **Moose** / GT Thunder / HMF / supported Ockerman was feeling pretty, tall after getting the checkered flag but making allowances for his Yamaha, teammate came only natural.

He said, "Balance was on a new machine and I'm sure was testing it. I know he made the creek jump, and I went around it. Plus, I totally botched the logs and he passed me there."



Donnie Ockerman holds a tight grip to first place in Iuka, Mississippi, with Ballance battling in second.

Ockerman became top dog when he picked a better line and made a pass in a really, gnarly section, which pulled the win in the Ockerman and Balance battle in Iuka, Mississippi. Immediately afterward, Balance stuck to him like glue, waiting for a chance to get around him, but it simply did not happen. Ockerman held a tight grip and did everything he could to stay out front. It worked, and he may have finished with Balance bumping his tail, but he was finished first.

"I did beat him at the Iron Man," said Ockerman, "but that's another story. This race was extremely tight, and I

knew exactly where I was going to pass him before we even got there. When we did, everything just played out exactly how I wanted it to go. I got around him and stayed in the lead."

Throughout his race, Ockerman had one thing in mind. He wanted to win, and he did it for a friend and a little Mid-South camaraderie.

He said, “**Brent Fultz**, a good friend of mine recently died, and I wanted to win for him. We use to race the Mid-South together and the many people who knew him, miss him. It was a very, tragic day, and may God be with him.”

“It was a pretty good ride, and I really like the 09,” said Ballance. “I got off to an okay start, and I got hung about three miles in and had to work my back to the front. Donnie and I went back and forth all day long. He really just picked a better line, and I could not get around him. I was tracking him the whole time, but I realized that he had already found all the good lines.”



The next rider to take the checkered flag was Mid-South’s current Champion, Craig Reed. He got off to a good start and enjoyed the track.

He said, “It was all right. I got hung in a tight section and about four or five people got around me. I had to work myself back up and this is how I finished.”

Mark Akers, track promoter, did a fantastic job at laying the nine miles. He made sure everyone was satisfied, including spectators. He offered quite a few obstacles for both riding and viewing pleasures.

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